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THE NEW
STATESMAN AND NATION

Incorporating *The Athenæum*

Vol. V. No. 100 (New Series) **SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1933** [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] **SIXPENCE**

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of one mind as to whether it would pay them, and General von Schleicher may hope, in the present violent dissensions among the parties opposed to him, to maintain or even to strengthen his position. But in any case we can see small prospect of an effective remedy for the social discontents and economic miseries of the German people. General von Schleicher was hailed with relief as the successor to Herr von Papen. And, doubtless, he is cleverer; but is he an improvement? The better to illustrate the "economics of glut" he has ordered the margarine makers to mix butter with their margarine—and for the rest he has given a fillip to reaction and militarism.

* * *

General von Schleicher, the "Soziale General" as he calls himself, inaugurated his rule by instructing the political police to refuse to renew the *permis de séjour* of foreigners suspected of Communist or strong pacifist tendencies. This was followed up by expulsions so numerous and so unjust that newspapers like the *Berliner Tageblatt* and the *Frankfurter Zeitung* were driven to protest in the clearest terms. And with these repressions go encouragements of other sentiments and other gentry. The ex-Crown Prince, dressed in his Death's Head Hussar uniform, is to be seen at official gatherings, where his friends, who include members of the present Cabinet, openly canvass for him as a possible "Reichsverweser," such as Horthy is in Hungary. At the recent Coburg wedding the ci-devant Grand Duchess Cyril, a cousin of the Duke of Coburg, was announced as "H.M. the Czarina of all the Russias," while the Crown Prince Rupprecht was not only hailed as King of Bavaria, but actually received a royal salvo of twenty-one guns from the Republican Reichswehr. Such are the straws in the wind which is blowing across Germany to-day, and which may presently become "storm over Europe."

The Irish Election

The Irish Free State polls next week. To the outsider the issue looks simple; it is broadly Mr. Cosgrave's policy of *rapprochement* with England against Mr. De Valera's policy of estrangement. For the Irish the issue is more complicated; economic gains and losses are confused with political principles or prejudices. Mr. De Valera is not only talking Separatism with a big S, but is fighting furiously on the annuities question. He never saw, he says, till nine years after its conclusion, the famous agreement between Mr. Cosgrave and the British Government, and when he did see it it was "just scraps of paper with a signature at the bottom." This may be true, and it is all very unfortunate. But what the Irish farmers are anxious to know is what is going to be done about it now. They want a "fair deal," they say, and a rapidly growing number of them think they will get it from Mr. Cosgrave rather than from Mr. De Valera. The Centre party, with a widespread membership of farmers, expects, according to Mr. McDermot, its leader, to win twenty seats, and if it does it should hold the balance in Mr. Cosgrave's favour. But the result of the polls seems likely to be close. The bookmakers of Cork were laying odds, at the beginning of this week, of 6 to 4 against De Valera.

India

Occasionally even the *Times* turns. It has performed a valuable public service by its characteristically urbane but devastating exposure of the methods by which the Indian Empire Society endeavours to force its views upon the Government. Only those with a rather intimate knowledge of recent Indian politics can gauge the extent of the mischief which has been done by a little group of Die-hards, many of whom are prominent members of the Society. Their activities were in two directions—intrigues amongst any section of Indians who might be persuaded to wreck the Federation, and propaganda inside the Conservative Party. Their efforts to organise an opposition group amongst the Moslems and the smaller Indian States were singularly ineffective. Every Indian is at heart a nationalist, however keen he may be to stake out a claim for his own particular interests. The Conservative Party proved a far more hopeful field. The specimen letters which the Society issued were illuminating; they showed exactly the lines upon which the Die-hards make their appeal. With a disproportionately large section of the press on their side and unlimited funds, and a few well-known names at their disposal they have been able to play upon the pseudo-patriotism and historical ignorance of one section, upon the racial prejudices of another, upon the timidity of those in receipt of fixed incomes, and the cupidity of those with business interests in the East.

The Meerut Verdict

The Meerut Conspiracy trial has ended with the imposition of really savage sentences upon a group of men—three Englishmen and twenty-four Indians—who had already suffered three years incarceration under the most miserable conditions. Mr. Philip Spratt, a young Cambridge graduate, is to be transported for twelve years, Mr. Bradley for ten years, and Mr. Hutchinson gets four years rigorous imprisonment. This last sentence is the most surprising, since Mr. Hutchinson was declared not guilty by the assessors whose opinion was over-ridden by the judge. The Indians have been given similar sentences varying from transportation for life to three years rigorous imprisonment. We have on various occasions drawn attention to the disgraceful protraction of this trial, to the unfair choice of the venue, to the dangerous implications of trying men not for specific illegal acts, but for having some vague connection with Communism or Socialism, of the very nature of which doctrines the Court seemed fantastically ignorant. We have not yet seen the judgment, but the magistrate's committal order, an immensely long document produced after a year's trial, would have made it unsafe for either the Prime Minister or the Leader of the Opposition to land in India, since they must by the very nature of their expressed opinions have been brought into the alleged "conspiracy." One unfortunate Indian was even guilty of advocating "the nationalisation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange"—the old formula of constitutional Socialism. The whole proceedings from beginning to end are utterly indefensible. There has never been the slightest evidence that the feeble and unsuccessful efforts to found a "Peasants and Workers" Party constituted a danger to the State. If any action was necessary, separate cases should have been brought relating to isolated offences in certain industrial centres and the rhodomontade about the general tendencies of Communism ruled out from the beginning as irrelevant.

The Colonial Office on the Run

What is the wisest line of action when you are caught red-handed in a felony? Sir Edward Grigg's method of apologising for our proposed theft of land in the Kavirondo reserve is to admit that we are committing a felony, but to urge that it is for the good of the natives we are looting, and to regret that we ever promised not to loot. The Colonial Office, forced by general indignation to put forward some sort of apology, has issued a document which is less frank, but not more convincing. Its line is to tell us that every consideration is being shown for the dispossessed natives and that their land is not being permanently taken away. The document carefully slurs over the main point of the indictment. The Native Lands Trust Ordinance, which provided for expropriation of native reserve land in certain cases *for public purposes*, absolutely prohibited any alienation from the reserves for the benefit of individual Europeans. The White Paper issued in June, 1930, a considered Government document, also laid down that no reserve land "however small in extent" should ever be alienated for the private advantage of any European or African. The Colonial Office simply passes over this vital distinction.

The Railway Dispute

The railway Trade Unions probably came off better than they expected as a result of the proceedings before the Wages Board. With the two halves of the Board unable to reach any agreement or compromise, it was left for Sir Harold Morris, as Chairman, to produce a separate report of his own. This report gave the railway companies only a fraction of what they had claimed. The companies, realising the impracticability of procuring their full demands, have now agreed to accept the Chairman's findings; but it may be pretty well taken for granted that the Unions will not agree to do this. Their view is that wages have fallen enough, and that it is unreasonable to make further reduction, especially now that the British Government has made the raising of the price level a declared object of policy. The question now is whether the companies will try to insist on the modified reductions proposed by the Chairman, even to the point of provoking a strike, or will look elsewhere for means of improving their financial position. The pressure upon the Government to legislate at once on the lines of the Salter Report has been greatly intensified during the past few days. The Salter Report proposes to deal with some of the awkward questions of competition between road and rail; and this is a far more promising direction than further wage-cuts for the companies' search for financial relief.

The Gold Standard

The Bank for International Settlements, at its meeting this week, makes a fresh affirmation of its faith in the gold standard as "the only possible foundation for the reconstruction of a sound world economy." To this controversial statement it adds that before there can be any restoration of such an economy, the War Debt problem must be cleared out of the way, as a complement to the settlement of the Reparations question at Lausanne last year. This at any rate is unquestionable. Though a return to gold is advocated, it is not contemplated that the old parities should be restored; for the countries now off gold are urged to stabilise their currencies at new parities. This may be taken as representing the result of the deliberations of the Preparatory Committee for the World Economic Conference. It is at any rate satisfactory that the need for new parities, rather than for any attempt to get back to the old, has been definitely recognised. Probably, as we suggested last week, it would be impossible to get the French and Americans to discuss monetary questions at all except on the basis of at least a hypothetical profession of faith in the gold standard. But the dangers of a premature attempt at currency stabilisation are very real; and it is to be hoped that, even if our delegates make ritual worship and sacrifice at the golden shrine, they will be very cautious about committing this country to an actual return to gold in the immediate future.

The Right of Search

As long ago as November 12th the question was asked in this Journal by what legal right the police raided the headquarters of the "hunger-marchers" and carried away a mass of documents in their search for incriminating literature. It was suggested that no such right of search existed in the case of a charge of sedition, and that "general warrants" remained as illegal to-day as they were pronounced to be in the days of Wilkes. This view has now been more fully presented in two letters in the *Manchester Guardian* from Professor Laski, who has had the opportunity of reading the verbatim transcript of the police depositions before Sir Chartres Biron. The procedure appears to have been illegal and arbitrary. The police removed documents wholesale for search, without even taking the elementary precaution of signing a record of the documents removed, and they "confined in their rooms" a number of persons whom they had no warrant to arrest. No attempt has been made to reply to Professor Laski's charges, which have indeed, to our knowledge, been pronounced unanswerable by high legal authorities. We are glad to see that that conglomerate body, the Federation of Progressive Societies, has arranged a protest meeting on January 26th on the subject of civil liberty, and that Professor Laski is amongst the speakers.

Political Ripples

The national coma which seems inseparable from a National Government is scarcely disturbed by the by-elections in Liverpool and East Fife. We are, of course, getting used to having half a dozen political parties—perhaps the Continental "group system" has become more than a temporary substitute for our party system. It no longer seems strange that Mr. MacDonald, still labelling himself "National Labour," should support the candidature of a Simonite Liberal who has as his rivals an independent Liberal, a Labour candidate, a Beaverbrook Conservative and Mr. Eric Linklater, representing not letters, but the Scottish Nationalists. A victory for Mr. Anderson would at least please Lord Beaverbrook, a victory for Mr. Westwood would encourage the dormant Labour Party, a victory for Mr. Keir, the independent Liberal, who is also a Scottish Nationalist and a Free Trader, would still further embarrass the official leaders of a Party which seems to have renounced independence. But the truth is that in the present public apathy no one cares very much who wins.

TECHNOCRACY

NOTHING since the discovery of psycho-analysis has so taken the United States by storm as Technocracy. What is this new thing about which everyone is talking? Is it indeed a new thing at all? It is none too easy to say what it is, even after a study of the pronouncements of its leaders. What they would have us believe about the facts of to-day—that is clear enough. What they would have us do—that is far less evident. It is not even certain whether Technocracy means the rule of "Techne" (productive science) or of the technicians. Yet this is surely a very pertinent question.

First, as to the facts. The Technocrats, like many people before them, have been deeply impressed by the absurdity of the present world situation—by the glaring contrast between our rapidly growing technical power to produce and our lamentable failure to make use of this power. They juggle, only more sensationally than previous jugglers, with figures showing the enormous increase in production per man-hour which the modern power system has brought about. They quote indisputable instances in which production in this or that trade has grown several hundredfold or a thousandfold in consequence of the increase in power-driven machinery. And they ask, very naturally, why in such a situation poverty persists, and why the talk is all of cutting wages and lengthening hours rather than of making huge additions to the sum of incomes and of leisure.

Moreover, they show, as Mr. Fred Henderson has shown in his *Economic Consequences of Power Production*, that under the conditions of modern industry the sheer physical power of men is becoming more and more irrelevant, and the complete displacement of one type of human labour after another by power-driven machinery is coming ever more rapidly about. They deny, as others have denied, that it is reasonable to expect this ever-growing army of displaced labour to be absorbed in other occupations under the present economic system, and point out that the employment of labour in the United States reached its peak in 1918, and that the huge increase in production up to 1929 was accomplished in face of a falling total of employment. This is true, but not new.

What is new about the Technocrats in this field is that they are setting to work to prepare a detailed analysis of the present extent of the technical productive capacity of the United States, in order to reinforce their contention that to-day, if the available resources were rightly used, the American people could enjoy, in return for only 660 hours work a year, a standard of life ten times higher than that of 1929. It is permissible to doubt whether their figures will prove anything approaching this, and yet to agree that they are bound to succeed in proving the possibility of a sufficiently sensational advance in the standard of life.

From this point, to which the Technocrats devote most of their attention, they come to the diagnosis of the cause of this lamentable condition of things. They find it, as many have found it before them, in the present system of production for profit, which they usually call the "price system." Chiefly, they put forward two contentions. One is Mr. J. A. Hobson's familiar, but none the less valuable, demonstration of a tendency in capitalist society during periods of prosperity to over-investment and under-consumption—inevitable disaster following, because the use of investment depends on the expansion of demand for the goods it is unable to produce. Secondly, they draw attention to the mountainous heaping up of debts which our present system involves; for every money-claim, every unit of purchasing power distributed, is a debt, and debts tend ever more and longer to outlast the real assets against which they were originally issued. The pricing of goods to cover these immense debt charges, say the Technocrats, taking here a leaf out of Major Douglas's book, results inevitably in a failure of demand through a deficiency of purchasing power.

What, then, would the Technocrats do? They would substitute for our present money, with its fluctuating power to buy goods, a new standard of value, based on "ergs"—units of work or energy. This new standard, we are assured, would be perfectly stable; but it is not very clear how it would be stable. Hardly in power over goods, since the number of "ergs" needed to produce goods would presumably vary as technique improved. Stable, then, in itself as a standard, and immune from purely monetary causes of fluctuation, as distinct from causes arising in the sphere of production. But on this point the Technocrats are none too clear, nor do they seem to have worked out how their new standard would operate in any detail. That the money would retain its buying power only for a limited time, in order to prevent the accumulation of mortgages on the future, they do tell us; and there is a great deal to be said for a vanishing money of this kind. That, too, is not a new idea; but it is none the worse for not being original.

It is not, however, to the Technocrats' monetary theories that America is chiefly listening, but rather to the demonstration—by a body of technicians who apparently have the backing of the Engineering Department of Columbia University—that the present poverty of the American people, and of the greater part of the civilised world, is really voluntary and self-imposed. The slump gave the American people, who had been thoroughly schooled to believe in their own prosperity, a very heavy shock; they are prepared to blame it on somebody or something. They have been told so much about their fabulous wealth that their ears are attuned to a propaganda which seeks to tell them that they are potentially even richer than they ever supposed; and, with their belief in business and industry, they are disposed to listen readily to men who come before them, not as cranks or economists, but as hard-headed efficiency experts in various branches of productive science.

If, under these stimuli, the Americans hearken to the Technocrats, what is to happen next? They will want something to be done, and done quickly, in order to place at their actual disposal the great wealth which is theirs for the taking, and to talk of getting rid of the "price system," and substituting a new standard of value, based on energy instead of gold, sounds well, but scarcely constitutes a working programme.

The root question, of course, is whether what the Technocrats desire can be done by a simple change in the monetary system, or whether it involves the destruction of Capitalism altogether. On this issue Technocracy is obscure. Its leaders claim to supersede Capitalism, Socialism and Communism alike; but by what? Surely

Socialism and Communism are attempts, based largely on the same diagnosis as Technocracy, to set free the imprisoned productive power of mankind. If Technocracy is an alternative, it must either offer more than a new standard of value or show *how* its new standard will perform the required miracle.

In this country, at any rate, Technocracy is more likely to be received by Socialists as a reinforcement of their own familiar arguments, restated from a new angle, than as a rival doctrine—that is, unless it develops much further on the constructive side. But the people of America are probably not at present open to Socialist arguments; and for them Technocracy should at least serve as a valuable eye-opener to the absurdities of the existing system. There are in all developed countries many thousands of technicians acutely conscious of the absurd disparity between the actual achievements and the immediate potentialities of industrialism, and yet sceptical of Socialism or Communism as a remedy, because they distrust the many-headed mob. Some of these will find in Technocracy a gospel after their hearts; but they will also be likely to discover before long that the technician has no hope of getting freedom to make the most of the industrial machine unless he allies himself with forces strong enough to enforce the required political and economic changes in society. Technocracy cannot eschew politics and yet achieve its ends. But for the moment its advocates are out to arouse interest and attention rather than to act. So they can afford to postpone the further question of how they are to get their way.

FROM THE JAPANESE ANGLE

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT]

FEW direct translations from the Japanese appear in our own papers, which can be roughly divided into those which were against supporting America and now lean to the international simony of selling a League benediction to Manchukuo, and those which repeat, with an emphasis born of hope, that Japan's rocky internal situation means that she is on the verge of collapse. Nor do the Japanese representatives abroad give us much information. With few exceptions they are distinguished by nothing so much as a propensity to the repetition of formulae that are either meaningless in themselves or ludicrous in combination. They have no qualms over combining statements of the "sacred rights" of Japan in Manchuria with respect for the Nine Power Treaty, or with a most profound lip-service to the cause of a peace they have been busily breaking. Their pronouncements at Geneva invariably contain suspicious clots of words, which seem to have a profound meaning for the speaker, while conveying little enough to his hearers. Though few are as bad as Mr. Yoshizawa (the delegate at Geneva last September), linguistic prowess is generally lacking among them, and even if they had clear ideas in Japanese it is uncertain whether they could put them across clearly in translation, let alone answer questions impromptu.

As to the utterances that filter through from Japan, they seem to come from minds that have lost nearly all connection with international realities. This, from General Araki, Minister for War, is a fair sample: "The countries of Eastern Asia are objects of oppression by white people. This is an undeniable fact and Japan should no longer let the impertinence go unpunished. It is the duty of Japan to oppose every action by the Powers which is not in accord with *the spirit of the Empire*, which is *the embodiment of righteousness and justice*. Japan cannot close her eyes to any disturbance in any part of Eastern Asia, for dispeace (*sic*) cannot be permitted to exist side by side with *the fundamental spirit* of the Empire." (The *Times*, October 4th.)

It is clear that only some strong emotional current can tide the reader over such a farrago. To those conversant with Japanese education the italicised phrases are diagnostic. They are allusions to the celebrated Rescript of the Emperor Meiji, which every Japanese child hears intoned with due ritual on solemn occasions during the year, and which gives the hearer a stimulus only comparable to a fusion of "England Expects" with the Apostles' Creed. The dim but thrilling phrases ineluctably touch off an explosion of patriotic fervour, in which state-religion is inextricably mingled.

Since September, 1931, the maintenance of an imperial line "coeval with heaven and earth" has been sicklied o'er with a thin wash of *pax japonica*. In the Rescript, part of the whole duty of man is to make an offer of himself to his country when occasion occurs, without fear or hesitation; it is on this base that General Araki is building when he says, "It is expected of every Japanese that he will be ready to take his part, spiritually and materially, in restoring peace, even through resort to arms. If we were really determined to such an extent it is needless to say that peace could be secured without drawing the sword. Determination does much."

The deep-seated emotional response to such allusions, laid down in earliest childhood and so unremittingly played upon, gives a reason for the almost complete absence in Japan of any critical examination of such transcendental utterances. It is hard for the individual to escape the bonds of the magical phrases and to think clearly himself; it is well-nigh impossible to express his criticism in such a way as will get a hearing. Where the State is the Emperor, and the Emperor is a god, opposition becomes akin to blasphemy.

It is fairly clear that this background has now been exploited for a year as a means of diverting popular attention from remediable internal causes of economic distress. The people have been told that lack of territory and resources are responsible for all their misery, and that weak neighbours endanger the very safety of their still-inviolate homeland. Manchuria has become "Japan's life-line" in the popular press, and as addition to this we find Mr. Mori, once Chief Secretary to the Inukai Cabinet, explaining that "the Japanese people are locked in their own territories by treaties." In his championship of a "Monroe Doctrine for Asia" there is always half an eye on India, while the militarists are quite obviously under the influence of Baron Tanaka's wild plan for world-domination, which began with Manchuria and China, and then took India under the imperial wing!

On the defensive side much, too, has been done. When the Manchurian adventure commenced the papers sedulously explained that Europe had no grasp of Far Eastern realities. The *Osaka Mainichi* boldly said that European diplomats "with few exceptions" did not know where Harbin was. This prepared ground is now being used to discredit the Lytton Commission as prejudiced and ill-informed: a very simple matter when no Liberal paper in Japan dare openly show agreement with the Report. As a further development, Dr. Thomas Baty, an international lawyer kept in an advisory capacity by Tokyo, has contributed an article published in all the leading papers, in which he explains that the "integrity" of China in law has no connection with its disintegration in practice, that China was not "integral" when the Nine Power Treaty was signed, and that respect for this fictional "integrity" is not incompatible with recognition of any "independent" disintegrated portion: a piece of casuistry in which the young person who said "I don't know what you mean, and if I did I wouldn't . . ." might recognise a kindred spirit.

It is to these verbal webs that the silence of moderate opinion in Japan may be mainly traced. The military party is anti-intellectual and anti-industrialist, so that neither the voice of reason nor that of interest gets a ready hearing. The economics of the men of blood are as simple as their logic. General Honjo said that if Japan was short of gold, well, there was plenty in Manchuria, wasn't there? General Araki's one argument

against the Lytton Report is that the recognition of Manchukuo has changed everything (though this was definitely foreseen in a chapter of the Report which the Army seems not to have penetrated).

Against such childlike innocence it is to be feared that diplomatic processses may be powerless. It is even possible that those who manipulated the general outburst of perfervid nationalism are now unable to keep it in control.

For in front of them lies the problem of all war mongers. By censorship, by the murder of opponents, and, most of all, by the use of magic phrases which appeal to an irrational nationalism, carefully fostered by the education of a generation, they have succeeded in driving all counter-currents of opinion underground, and of presenting to the world a picture of the united nation in arms. No nation can prosecute a war without this illusion of unity. It lasts as long as internal conditions are tolerable and the war abroad can be presented as a success. But the growing distress in Japan and the realisation—which Geneva has so far done little to hasten—that Japan has plunged into an adventure in China which cannot be ultimately successful must gradually destroy this fictitious unity. At present our statesmen behave as if they too thought it blasphemy to criticise the sacred war lords of Japan.

A LONDON DIARY

A LONG conversation with Mr. Lloyd George in the autumn convinced me that he was as full of beans as ever and mentally and physically as vigorous as either Palmerston or Gladstone at his age—and at sixty-nine they both had another ten years of political leadership in front of them. But, then, Mr. Lloyd George has no party to lead. So I read with interest the interviews he gave to representatives of the *Manchester Guardian* and *News Chronicle* by way of celebrating his seventieth birthday. While modestly disclaiming any desire for future office, he admitted that he agreed with a mysterious religious prophet who had told him three or four years ago that " God has a greater task for you than any you have yet undertaken." What is all this likely to amount to in the near future? If I correctly understand the lines on which Mr. Lloyd George's mind is working, we may expect to see him urging the Welsh Liberals, and through them the National Liberal Federation, to call upon Liberal Members of the House of Commons to cross to the Opposition Benches. If the National Liberal Federation refuses, I should think Mr. Lloyd George is likely to have a shot at forming a new party of his own. Young Liberals I've talked to recently would certainly welcome an independent Radical Party.

* * *

In a week of political stagnation the newspapers have had two wonderful bits of luck. The Test Match has been played in the atmosphere of a South Wales cup-tie; the harmony of the Empire seems more seriously threatened by leg-theory bowling and the remarks of Woodfull to Warner than by the Ottawa Conference and the bitter things said by Mr. Bennett to Mr. Baldwin. But the capture and death of Furnace have been even more exhilarating news. Murder and the chase have become the very breath of everyday existence. On Monday a bus conductor, evidently keen on finding a quip for each customer, had a particularly good reception for his " Colder since Furnace was caught, ain't it? " And on Tuesday the newsboy outside a tube station was shouting, without change of intonation or pause between the items: " Furnace dead sensation close of play." No one seems to have commented on the irony of the situation in which half a dozen doctors fought for Furnace's life while half a dozen detectives sat in an outer ring waiting to take it away again. We may be glad that Furnace is dead and that he died the way he did. We are spared the sensational weeks of suspense and the interviews with his relatives, and all the rest of it. Perhaps we are even spared other murders, though that we shall never know. For three out of every four murders are committed by half-witted or less than half-witted people, and, as several authorities have recently testified, some of these are certainly induced to commit murders by a pathological desire to imitate a murder which haunts them on every placard. I am not suggesting that the newspapers are to blame, but that as long as we retain the death penalty we shall continue to be subjected to these life and death dramas in which the most primitive kinds of excitement and the most luxurious forms of sentimentalism are exploited to the full.

* * *

Last week, at the Old Bailey, Mr. Compton Mackenzie was fined £100 for breaking the Official Secrets Act and ordered to pay a sum not exceeding £100 towards the costs, so that the Crown's victory was certainly of the Pyrrhic kind. Mr. Mackenzie had, of course, no legal defence to offer, but I gather from the judge's very scrupulous summing-up that his book did no damage to anyone: I believe, indeed, that that was officially admitted. Why, then, was the trial ever instituted? The public pays, and no one—certainly not the judge—seems to have understood why the Crown attached importance to the case. The war-time Secret Service is not now a secret—its constitution, its achievements and its vanities have been freely discussed often enough: indeed, during the hearing of the case an article describing the notorious M.I.i.C., published in THE NEW STATESMAN of November 1st, 1924, was read in full. If the Government intended to prosecute anybody it would have been better if they had started at the top with ex-Cabinet Ministers; no one would have misjudged their motives then. But to have picked out one of the extremist leaders of the Scottish Home Rule Party, who had, all through the war, been a sharp and mocking thorn in the red-tape-swathed sides of the Foreign and War Offices was to ask for criticism, and from some of the more extreme supporters of Mr. Mackenzie's National cause in Scotland I hear fantastic complaints against Sir John Gilmour, who had not long become Home Secretary when the trial was instituted. For Sir John is a strong opponent of Scottish Home Rule, and he took the trouble to speak vehemently on several occasions against Mr. Mackenzie's candidature for the Lord Rectorship of Glasgow University. Probably Sir John had nothing to do with the matter at all but I expect a pretty little controversy when Parliament meets.

* * *

Most people solve their mental troubles by some occasional flight from reality; in a few cases the flight is complete enough to constitute insanity. In others—a fairly steady percentage, I believe—the certifiable stage is never reached, but people who are quite sane in their ordinary conduct become on some one point obsessed—they see spies in every corner, prophecies of every detail of world history written on the Great Pyramid, or find some preposterous nostrum for every social evil about which they are psychologically compelled constantly to write, often in large block capitals, to editors of newspapers. This Great Pyramid type of mentality is well illustrated by a book called the *Alien Menace*, about which its author, Lieut.-Col. A. H. Lane, who, I have no doubt, is an excellent soldier and sensible enough on other matters, wrote a letter in this journal last week. As a pathological study his work is of great interest. It is all about the " hidden hand," Mrs. Nesta Webster is the " greatest living historian," there are foreigners—Jews, Germans, Russians, Italians, Irishmen—un-English, dangerous people, you understand, with names ending in *ski* or *mann*—everywhere, on the films, in the B.B.C., in our Universities, in industry and finance; we are told " *how they get here*," where the Bolsheviks " lurk " (Bolsheviks always " lurk "), and a whole chapter which reveals that Jews actually hold important positions in Palestine! Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, whom I had always imagined a good enough Englishman, is several times referred to as " a friend " of that revolutionary, Professor H. J. Laski. The London School of Economics is a terrible place; people like Professors Westermarck and Malinowski and Seligman are there. Indeed, Sir William Beveridge is apparently almost

as deeply in the plot as Sir John Reith, who harbours people with names like Siepman and actually lets foreigners broadcast! The present chairman is "a Liberal, the Rt. Hon. J. H. Whitley, ex-Speaker of the House of Commons, whose first wife was Marguerita Virginia, daughter of Giulio Marchetti." Even the press is partly controlled by people of alien extraction, "who by clever, very gradual suggestion" have "re-educated a large proportion of our people, destroyed their Patriotism and made them International and Pacific."

The book ends superbly:

> Has everything I have described come about automatically? Is all that has happened pure coincidence, or is there not some directing-power, some anti-British force, which through decades has been to a large extent responsible for the terrible conditions existing in our unfortunate country? If this present state of affairs continues will it not be that England will no longer be English, and our Dominions no longer British?

* * *

> Harold the Canary. Mrs. Palmer, Bayswater, grieves to tell those exceedingly kind anonymous readers who for the past two years have sent gifts of groundsel for her little bird, that he died from paralysis on Tuesday, only six years old. He enjoyed the groundsel up to the very end. Quite a little personage.—[Newspaper advert.]

* * *

> From the *Times* comment on the Meerut trial—One of the accused, Dhundiraj Thengdi, died during the hearing of the case, which has cost the Government 16 lakhs of rupees (£123,000).

Very inconsiderate of the accused, wasn't it? CRITIC.

DE GUSTIBUS

IT was a typically Roman saying—typical of a people whose national poet gloried in their incapacity as artists. And it has done good service to Philistinism ever since; the Podsnaps often seem to owe nothing but this one maxim to an education in the classics. It is, of course, perfectly true that among people whose aesthetic reactions are confined to likes and dislikes—who proudly boast that they know nothing about art, but know "what they like"—among such people no subject of discussion is more futile nor more acrimonious than one about their tastes. But in proportion as people have developed their natural aptitudes by continued and critical attention to many different works of art such discussions are not only not envenomed by mere partisanship but may be extremely interesting and may give to both sides, whether they finally agree or not, a new insight both into the nature of the subject and of their own habitual reactions. Moreover, the value of such discussions depends very largely on having the work in question before one's eyes. Discussions about a picture of which both disputants have only a memory image almost always lead to difficulties, because the two are talking about different things.

The B.B.C. in its solicitude for our spiritual welfare has published recently in the *Listener* a series of comparisons between pairs of works of applied art in connection with Professor Burt's talks on Psychology. People are invited to send in a statement of their preference for one or other of either pair, giving their reasons for this preference. Subsequently the "right" answers will be published. It is hoped that these discussions may incite in ordinary people a more critically attentive attitude to design in industrial works and that gradually "taste" may become, not a rare distinction, but a matter of course.

Now, such a programme is evidently open to a tremendous fire of criticism. The first movement of nearly everyone will be, I think, insurgence. Who are you to tell us what is the "right" answer to a question of taste? By what right do you consider that my taste is in need of your busybody interference? And when you have "improved" industrial design, what reason have you to think you are doing me any good? The chances are that I shall not like your new designs as well as what I get any day in the shops. And if this is the reply of the ordinary citizen it is probable that it will be echoed by the conscious aesthete, who will doubt of anyone's authority to settle such questions but his own. Like some extreme sectarians, he will object, not to the idea of orthodoxy in itself, but to the idea that anyone outside his particular chapel possesses the real article.

Let us see what can be said in defence of a scheme which seems bound to arouse such violent antagonism. Miss Margaret Bulley, who has got up the scheme, has had much experience in lectures, given mostly to school-children, of the possibility of arousing a new interest in aesthetic questions by this method of comparison, and she has taken great pains in preparing the comparisons in the *Listener*. One main point is to make the two objects of each pair as strictly comparable as possible so as to avoid allowing the judgment to be influenced by purely accidental and non-aesthetic considerations. As far as possible the two objects for comparison must serve a similar purpose, and both serve it adequately so as to eliminate the idea of functional fitness and concentrate on aesthetic effect. Nor must one be highly ornamental and the other plain, in order to avoid preferences based on second-hand theories of the superior moral value of plain things or the superior social prestige of ornate ones. In this way it may be possible to get people to concentrate their attention on questions of proportion, of clarity of design, of continuity and harmony of rhythm, and so forth. Then with regard to the chief stone of offence, namely, the "right" choice, the test comparisons have all been submitted to six people of some recognised authority in the world of art—museum directors, artists and critics. And in every case their choice is unanimous. These unanimous judgments are taken to be the "right" ones. Clearly, here we are far from any objective proof such as would be accepted in a scientific inquiry, and indeed no such absolute proof is possible in matters of aesthetics. None of us, not even the most sensitive and highly trained, can escape the fact that he belongs to a particular generation and that each generation grows up in an atmosphere which inclines towards a certain type of aesthetic bias. In the eighteenth century there was hardly any such thing as a good primitive picture; at the end of the nineteenth there was hardly any such thing as a bad one; and now, again, the Primitives are coming in for a full share of adverse criticism. There is no possibility of escaping altogether from these waves of aesthetic influence, and doubtless the unanimity of the experts of to-day might be found curious in another fifty years. It is only by a consensus of opinion lasting over centuries that the great reputations in the arts can be said to have, if not an objective validity, at least some universal validity for civilised human beings.

Anyhow, Miss Bulley has fortified her position with a sufficiently striking consensus of such authority as is attainable, and the probability is that people will subscribe to her judgments in proportion as they are sensitive to aesthetic values, whilst those who differ may be induced by this display of authority to give the question a further trial and perhaps, by a more continuous attention to aesthetic questions, to find an increasing pleasure with the growth of their sensibility. Such at least is the hope which has prompted the scheme, and after all, whether the answers be right or wrong, the mere fact of focusing attention on these questions by discussion seems to me all to the good. No one who is conversant with the industrial art of past centuries can be happy about the state of modern industrial art, although there are many welcome signs of improvement, and not the least profitable end to begin at is the education of the sensibility of the public to beauty in common things. In some towns in America, where the Museums carry on an active educational work among the children, these have infected their parents with dissatisfaction with the designs offered by manufacturers. And the result of this has sometimes been to force manufacturers to give a great deal more consideration to design than they were wont.

But there is another point of view from which such a questionnaire as the *Listener* submits to the public may be of value. It will give us information about people's reactions to works of

art. By the reasons given for preferences it may be possible to learn much about the relative frequency of true aesthetic reactions in comparison with reactions based on other considerations, for it is almost certain that these will intervene. In the case of Miss Margaret Bulley's previous questionnaires some very interesting and unexpected results came to light. In these cases the questions were addressed to school children whose sex, age and general social position were known, and this, of course, added greatly to their value.

They revealed the fact that at six years old children gave roughly 50 per cent. of "right" answers: this standard declined steadily till at twelve there were only 20 per cent. of "right" answers. The curve thenceforward rose steadily till at sixteen they returned to the standard of six. The same test was applied to a large number of French school children, and the curve for age was almost identical in the two countries, except that the French maintained consistently a slightly higher percentage of "right" answers.

No such curious results can well be anticipated from the present questionnaire, because it will be difficult to get data as to the answerers, but at least it will be curious to see what percentage of people agree with verdicts which are practically unanimous among people of special training in the arts, and, at the very least, this may afford a basis for future comparisons. It is to be hoped, moreover, that it may inspire some one to undertake a questionnaire on reactions to the visual arts upon the lines of the extremely revelatory inquiry recently published by Vernon Lee on music. The fact is that aesthetics has neglected far too much the nature of the receiving end of the artistic transaction, which is after all as essential as the inquiry into the nature of the transmitter.

ROGER FRY

CIGARETTE-ENDS

AMONG the many complaints that have recently appeared in the correspondence columns of newspapers—those ever-readable receptacles of the wrongs and disgusts of the common man—I was particularly interested in one which referred to the disposal of cigarette-ends. "I was on a cruise some time ago," said the writer of the letter, "and a lighted cigarette-end blew in through my porthole, burning a hole in my travelling rug. On deck soon after, I related the incident to a lady, saying how careless people were. She cordially agreed with me, and, as she did so, threw her burning cigarette-end overboard." An example, according to the writer, of the "unconscious carelessness of people."

The cigarette is a comparative novelty, but it has been long enough in use to make it a matter for surprise that the human race has not yet discovered a satisfactory means of compelling the smoker not to make a nuisance of himself in getting rid of cigarette-ends and ashes. At a small party the problem can be solved with the help of a few ash-trays, though even at a small party the ash-tray is as often as not out of reach when one needs it. At a large party, however, where there is scarcely room to move, and where no one can be sure of finding an ash-tray even after a five minutes search, the sensitive smoker is in a real difficulty. If he moves off in search of an ash-tray into which to drop the smouldering remnant of his cigarette, he may be separated for good from the only person in the room to whom he ardently wishes to talk. If he remains holding the cigarette-butt, his fingers may get burnt, and the company even of the wittiest man or of the most beautiful woman is a poor compensation for torture by fire. In agony of mind he looks for a flower-pot or an empty glass into which to drop the offending butt. If he is a fastidious man, however, he realises that there is nothing more beastly looking than a litter of cigarette-ends in a flower pot, and he hesitates to contribute to such beastliness except when no one is looking. Even an empty whisky-glass looks doubly forlorn with a soaked cigarette butt disintegrating at the bottom of it. I have seen a man—and a highly civilised man, too—in such circumstances dropping his cigarette-end deliberately on the parquet and crushing it out with his shoe. That appeared to me to be the abomination of abominations. Floors, except in public houses and in offices, should be reserved entirely for ashes. Some people would not allow you to drop even ashes on the floor, but, if you may not drop cigarette-ash on the floor, where in heaven's name may you drop it? The ash will fall, whether you want it to fall or not, and the important thing is not to let it fall on your clothes or on the furniture. In the absence of an ash-tray, there is no alternative to tipping it on to the floor, choosing by preference a part of the floor which is covered by a rug or carpet. It has long been recognised that no carpet was ever permanently the worse for a fall of cigarette-ash. Cigarette-ash is the cleanest form of dust. Hostesses who object to it are in their hearts haters of tobacco.

Even in the disposal of cigarette-ash, however, there is a certain etiquette to be observed. The guest should always begin the evening by being excessively scrupulous in looking about for an ash-tray, and should make a point of never being the first person to scatter the ash on the carpet. As the evening advances, however, he will perceive that a number of other persons, less considerate than himself, have been gradually surrounding their chairs with little nebulae of ash and that it would be fighting in a lost cause to attempt any longer to preserve the floor from defilement. Other people having begun it, he may now scatter his ashes freely with a good conscience. It is at this point that a party gets going. Everybody, the great problem having been solved, feels carefree and happy. Even if ash-trays were handed round now by a tortured host, nobody would use them. Untidiness is the mark of enjoyment. That is why human beings ruin the most beautiful parts of the countryside with litter till they are stopped by the police.

I have certainly never seen a human being looking more miserable than the self-conscious young man, who, when the worst comes to the worst, is afraid to drop cigarette-ash boldly on the floor. I have seen a hyper-sensitive youth secretly tipping the ash into one of his pockets and even into the side of his shoe. This is to lose half the pleasure of smoking. Smoking in such circumstances becomes a source of anxiety, of nervous repressions that may well affect a man's moral in later years. There is no use in smoking if one does not accept the full consequences of smoking; and one of the consequences of smoking is that no room looks the same after a general indulgence in tobacco as it did before it. In the Victorian age the haters of tobacco objected to it chiefly on the ground of its offensive smell. Smokers—callously enough, perhaps—overrode this objection, and, ultimately, instead of making only one room in the house smell foully of the burning weed, claimed almost every room in the house as smoker's territory. The anti-smokers, driven out of their strongest position, did their best thereafter to make the lives of smokers a nuisance to them by objecting to the presence of butts on the hearth and ashes on the carpet. Their feeble voices, however, are by now scarcely audible; or, if they are audible, the smokers pretend not to hear them.

Not that I would claim an entirely free hand for the smoker in the disposal of his refuse. I hold, for example, that the man or the woman who leaves a burning cigarette on the top of a piano or on a mantelpiece shows not courage but inconsiderateness. One may leave a butt almost anywhere, but not where it will do permanent damage. Similarly, I hold that the motorist is not to be praised who throws a burning butt at random out of the window of his car in such a way that it may strike a passing motor-cyclist in the eye. Smokers should always think of other people when it is possible for them to think of other people. It was generally felt by smokers, for example, in the days when the upper decks of buses and tramcars were unroofed that it was their duty to occupy back seats; and I am sure we should all have occupied back seats if they had not already been occupied by non-smokers. I have seen a woman's dress set alight by the red-hot spark from a pipe on the top of a tram, and, if she

had not herself been in a back seat, I am certain that the smoker who caused the damage would have apologised. Even in theatres and at concerts most smokers, I imagine, would gladly resign their right to smoke during the performance. One bad cigar can destroy a play for a dozen people; and, if smoking is permitted, there is always somebody who will light a bad cigar. Besides, in theatres and concert-rooms there is usually a malevolent movement of the air which carries the fumes of one's tobacco straight to the nose and eyes of some non-smoking woman whose hatred is too large a price to pay even for the pleasure of tobacco. If everybody smoked all the time, as in a rational world perhaps everybody would, this difficulty would vanish. But we must take facts as we find them, and we may as well recognise the fact that there is still a great deal of missionary work to be done before the large body of non-smokers is converted to reasonable behaviour. We must also recognise that their ranks are full of bigotry, and that there are hundreds of non-smokers who hate tobacco as bitterly as the Australians hate leg-theory bowling. Hence it behoves us to walk warily and to see to it that our fuming does not interfere more than is absolutely necessary with the amenities of social life. The smoker should practise give and take. He should both give trouble and take trouble, and do his best not to make himself detested more than it is customary for one human being to be detested by another.

As for smokers on board ship, the problem of disposing of their cigarette-ends is by no means simple. If a smoker throws a cigarette-end on the deck, the wind carries it off, showering sparks like a catherine-wheel, before he has had time to set his heel on it and extinguish it. If, on the other hand, he throws it overboard, the gale may carry it through a porthole and cause a large burn in a stranger's travelling rug. Even here, however, much may be achieved by a study of the direction of the wind. Let the smoker get to the lee-side of the ship and take aim at the ocean. The ocean is large, and he must be a poor shot indeed who cannot find a hollow in it that will make a secure grave for a cigarette-butt. Unfortunately, there are thousands of smokers who do not care where their butts go so long as they get rid of them. I have seen men famous in their own professions sitting at the windows of upper rooms in Fleet Street and throwing butts and matches into the street without the slightest thought of the people who might be walking there. In Shakespeare's day I suppose this was the common method of disposing of rubbish of all sorts, and even in a modern city I have found myself ducking to avoid an empty bottle flung carelessly out of a window. This, however, is a form of anarchism ill-suited to our crowded and orderly civilisation. Nowadays, we are not allowed to throw bottles and other heavy objects even out of the windows of railway trains. This prohibition is denounced by anarchists as an attempt to restrict our liberty and impose the slave-mind on us. Moderate men agree, however, that it is important to protect the lives of railway-workers, and that to claim the liberty to be careless is not the mark of a genuinely liberal mind. On the same principle, I should say that while the smoker has a perfect right to disgust or dismay other people he has no right to do injury—at least, not permanent injury—to them or their belongings. That sentence, I think, sums up the whole ethics and etiquette of the use of tobacco.

Y. Y.

AN ADMINISTRATIVE DETAIL

This is an administrative question, and we cannot do any good by attempting in this country to take over the administration of Kenya.—Sir Edward Grigg in the *Times*.

WHY do Archbishops rage, and why
Are such vain things imagined by
The folk whose fancies fructify
Weekly, in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION?

How soon will our idealists learn
That ethics are their sole concern,
And moral issues never turn
On concrete questions of administration?

'Tis true enough, I understand,
That we originally planned,
When confiscating native land,
To give them some specific compensation;
But whether this should take indeed
The actual form we guaranteed,
Is merely, it must be agreed,
A minor matter of administration.

From Downing Street our lead we take
When any principle's at stake
(As when it bids our tariffs make
Proof of Imperial Discrimination).
On lesser matters 'twere absurd
To let that distant voice be heard:
Things like the Empire's plighted word
Are petty details of administration.

MACFLECKNOE

Correspondence

THE FUTURE OF INDIA

SIR,—In a few weeks His Majesty's Government will be announcing their proposals about the future government of India for submission to the Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament. It is common ground between all parties that they need to be discussed, both here and in India itself, in an atmosphere of calm and good will.

We do not believe such an atmosphere can be obtained so long as Mr. Gandhi and thousands of his supporters remain in prison. Their detention compels a large part of Indian public opinion to look unfavourably upon any proposals made by the Government of this country. It minimises the possibility of co-operation both immediately and in the future. It maximises the difficulty of implementing in practice any proposals embodied in an act of Parliament. It persuades great masses of people to concentrate upon grievances attention which needs, in a mood of high seriousness, to be given to proceedings of the highest importance.

The recent session of the Round Table Conference concluded with a strong appeal from Sir Tej Sapru, the moderation of whose opinions is well known, for the release of Mr. Gandhi and his associates. We desire to support that appeal with all the emphasis at our command. We believe that no other way is available by which Indian opinion can be persuaded to approach the Government's proposals in a spirit of reasoned criticism. We are convinced that a gesture of good will, such as this, may well be vital to the future of our relationship with the Indian people. We recognise the many difficulties which stand in the way. But we are certain that a policy of creative generosity is at this time the one method of securing the triumph of a reasonable spirit in Anglo-Indian affairs. A failure to show now a temper of magnanimity will only increase in every direction the difficulties before those who will be responsible in the future for the conduct of Indian government. A refusal to be magnanimous in the face of impending events would be the revelation of a blindness to their significance pregnant, we think, with tragic results.

BERTRAND RUSSELL
HAROLD J. LASKI
C. F. ANDREWS
CARL HEATH
F. W. NORWOOD
HENRY W. NEVINSON
J. F. HORRABIN
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MARLEY
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ELLEN WILKINSON
MORGAN JONES
MAUDE ROYDEN
LAURENCE HOUSMAN
A. SUSAN LAWRENCE
JAMES MARLEY

The India League,
146 Strand, W.C.2.

CAMPS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

SIR,—The spectacle of untilled land within a few miles of men sick for want of satisfying work has become familiar to us; but most of the efforts to put the two opposing misfortunes together so that they may cancel each other are impracticable because the habit of undertaking work only for financial profit dominates the situation; it is considered necessary that those invited to work should have some reasonable hope of gaining financially by it. But success on these lines would only add to the goods for sale and so put others out of employment.

It is good to see, however, that there is an increasing recognition of the fact that unemployment—i.e., a large diminution in the number of hours of labour required to supply the things we need—is a state of affairs not to be fought but welcomed. From the dawn of recorded history mankind has striven to escape from starvation and want at the expense of a minimum of labour; to this end he has invented weapons and tools and has, whenever possible, created a slave class to use them for him. Now at last we need no slave class, because machines can do the heavy work; but, though we can now have leisure, we have lost the art of living our lives in our preoccupation with earning a living. Leisure to a man who has no constructive use for it is an opportunity only for destructive effort, and so civilisation is in danger of destroying itself because it has reached the goal for which it has striven for 10,000 years.

The greatest need of all, therefore, is re-education in the constructive use of leisure, and to this end the restoration to the surplus labourers of our towns of an interest in the more satisfying pursuits of rural life is essential. The policy of Grith Fyrd Camps is to take men of all classes who can be spared from industry, including great numbers of unemployed men from our towns, and to place them on land which would otherwise be unused; and to apply the money which is in any case provided to save them from starvation to make up the difference between the amount of goods their labour, at first unskilled, can produce for themselves and that required for a simple but adequate standard of living. They will not in any case compete in the sale of goods or services. They will apply themselves primarily to living a complete and worthwhile life; they will produce all they can, accepting a diminishing subsidy from industry, and applying all their surplus of interest and energy to the betterment of their country in every way that does not involve industrial competition.

The movement has made its small beginning; it has twenty-four men in its first camp. If it is to grow with speed enough to overtake a great national necessity, it will require generous support in money for initial equipment and management of training camps, and an influx of live men of every class into the camps. Its address for all purposes is Grith Fyrd Camps, Toynbee Hall, London, E.1.

J. NORMAN GLAISTER,
Hon. Secretary

THE DOG FIGHT

SIR,—I seldom dissent from the policy of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, but I believe you are wrong about the Tote for the following reasons.

Unrestricted gambling facilities would lead to such widespread social evils and moral havoc that no responsible person, least of all yourself, would suggest it. It is equally obvious that any attempt to suppress the private act of gambling by Act of Parliament would be not only futile but objectionable, since people cannot be made good by legislation and the policeman turned moralist is always a mistake.

The problem remains, therefore, of how, while leaving the personal problem of gambling to the educationist, the State can in the public interest restrict the organised facilities for gambling and the exploitation of the gambling instinct for private profit. The immediate problem is essentially one of where the legal recognition of gambling is to be stabilised pending more radical treatment. The Tote was unknown in England until five years ago, and explicit pledges were given in Parliament when the Racecourse Betting Act became law that its introduction should be restricted to the racecourse. Because the Act was badly drafted people for private profit have been allowed to evade that undertaking. The Tote on the dog tracks has increased betting, and thereby increased the social havoc which inevitably follows in its train.

All experience shows that the extension of the legal recognition of gambling will result in an increase in gambling practices. Surely common sense suggests that, pending more radical treatment, the position should be temporarily stabilised where Parliament intended it to be stabilised only five years ago.

Of course, this leaves a totally illogical position which the Royal Commission must deal with in its final report. But I venture to think that no one with any personal knowledge of the widespread ruin for which the present-day gambling facilities are responsible can desire to see any extension of them.

1 Queen's Rise, E. ROY CALVERT
Richmond, Surrey.

JUSTICE AND LIBERTY

SIR,—For most of my life I have been proud of being an Englishman, of belonging to a country which *meant* liberty instead of just talking about it. Three recent happenings make it difficult any longer to feel that pride.

First, the Lane Pictures. A Committee of the House of Commons has admitted that England is holding on to thirty-nine very valuable French Masters which Sir Henry Lane bequeathed to Ireland, because, although he signed the codicil to his will, giving the pictures to Ireland, he forgot to have his signature witnessed. The signature and its intention are not disputed. The Committee talked, "about it and about," but there is the main fact and it is utterly unfair to Ireland.

Secondly, our judicial treatment of Communists. Tom Mann and another are put in prison with no offences alleged against them. Another Communist is given two years for illegally inciting unemployed workers. Case after case since the war has shown that Communists, because they are unpopular, cannot expect even-handed justice in this country.

Thirdly, a Secretary of State defends the breaking of an explicit pledge by the Kenya Government to natives and seems willing to allow them to be driven off their land because gold has been found under it. Has he so soon forgotten how the Boer War began and how it ended—in entire supersession of British rule in South Africa? Has he forgotten how his countrymen were once asked to give their lives to defend a "scrap of paper"? But who in the present Government cares for that principle to-day?

I write, Sir, not because it gives me pleasure to reproach my country, but to enlist, as I know I may, the aid of your paper and its readers to do what in us lies to restore to England her historic position as the protagonist of justice and liberty.

5 Holly Bank, E. N. MOZLEY
Headingley, Leeds.

THE IRISH ELECTION AND P.R.

SIR,—As I have voted in Irish elections under the old system and under P.R., and have also some experience of voting in England under the single-member system, I would like to comment upon the references to P.R. in the very interesting article on "The Irish Election" in your issue of the 14th instant. The writer of the article suggests that P.R. will "stabilise" a certain "cleavage in Irish society" for "years or decades to come." Now, as a matter of fact, the first use to which P.R. was put in the Irish Free State was to prevent the stereotyping of the position which was created when the Treaty was approved by the Dail in January, 1922, by the very narrow majority of seven votes. There was a serious difference of opinion both within the Dail and within the Irish Republican Army as regards the holding of the general election required by the Treaty. The two sections of the Army issued a pronouncement in favour of an "agreed" election, and Mr. Michael Collins and Mr. De Valera, representing the pro-Treaty and the anti-Treaty forces in the Dail, signed a "pact" outlining the conditions under which the election should be held.

Briefly, these conditions were (1) that a national coalition panel should be formed of candidates of both parties, and (2) that the number of candidates for each party should be its strength as it existed at that time in the Dail. P.R. saved the situation. It was this, and this alone, which made possible effective independent action. Under the single-member system no one who did not possess the national Sinn Fein coupon could have stood with any chance of success. As it was it needed only one non-panel candidate (like the one Labour candidate in the county of Galway) with sufficient courage to stand to force an election over a whole county. The elector's first choice showed whether he preferred a pro-Treaty to an anti-Treaty candidate. The mind of the country on the dominant issue was definitely ascertained, while

the electors were not obliged to do violence to their views on other important policies.

On the other hand, the abolition of P.R. in Northern Ireland had the effect of reinstating stereotyped conditions between Protestant and Catholic.

In this new Free State election P.R. has made possible the emergence of a centre party which will profoundly influence affairs. It will contain individuals whose voices would not have been heard in the Dail under a single-member system. There is no stereotyping of conditions, but there are all the possibilities of new modifications.

If P.R. had been in operation on this side in the fateful general election of October, 1931, the electors could have expressed their views on the main issue of the hour without subordinating their views on other important matters. It would not, for instance, have been necessary for Liberal candidates to rely upon Conservative votes, or for a convinced Free Trader to vote for a Protectionist. P.R. releases the elector from the bondage in which the single-member system imprisons him.

233 Grand Buildings, JOHN MACKIE
Trafalgar Square, W.C.2

THE STEINER METHOD

SIR,—I have had a large number of letters asking for particulars of the biological-dynamic methods of crop raising advocated by Dr. Rudolph Steiner. Might I ask for space to say that those interested would do well to apply to Dr. Carl Mirbt, Demeter House, Albert Road, Stetchford, Birmingham. He is the technical expert of the Foundation, and I am no more than one of the many humble investigators of a movement that seems to be of even more than practical worth. S. L. B.

21 Holland Park, W.11

RILKE'S *STORIES OF GOD*

SIR,—If your reviewer, Mr. Stonier, will look at the back of the title-page of *Stories of God* he will find the names of the translators, who surely deserve a more appreciative adjective than capable, there given as Nora Purtscher-Wydenbruck and Herter Norton. This translation is an excellent piece of work, delicate and subtle.

Mr. Stonier might also have mentioned the translation, by Miss Sackville-West and her cousin, of Rilke's *Duineser Elegien*, published by the Hogarth Press, in a limited edition, in October, 1931. I have not seen the book, but I have been told that the difficulties involved in translating Rilke's poetry into English have not been altogether overcome. Heffers, also, have published, in English, Olivero's study of Rilke.

This is, of course, only a beginning, and it is to be hoped that more will follow, and one may wish that Countess Wydenbruck will now employ her art upon the poems. Certainly Rilke is important enough and far better worth having in translation than the numerous popular German books which now find their way over here. H. J. H. BRADLEY

The University of Liverpool.

KARL MARX

SIR,—Fifty years ago, on the 14th March, Karl Marx died. To commemorate this anniversary of the man who has played so large a part in politics since his death, possibly more now than at any other time, we are holding an Exhibition of his Works and those of his friend and collaborator, F. Engels, together with books and pamphlets published since which bear on Marxism, and a historical pictorial survey.

We shall be very glad if any of your readers who are interested would co-operate with us in lending or selling us, in certain cases possibly allowing us to photograph original editions, books, pamphlets or newspapers, "Marxiana," contemporary photographs, and so on. Every care will be taken of material lent to us. Further details will be announced in your columns later.

33 Great James Street, W.C.1. L. J. PARSONS
Martin Lawrence, Ltd.

COVENT GARDEN OPERA HOUSE

SIR,—In an interview given to the *Observer* Lady Snowden says she is heartbroken at the prospect of Covent Garden Opera House being demolished, especially before an alternative building was ready. She says it has a great tradition. Undoubtedly, but chiefly, owing to the prices prevailing, as a rich music festival for wealth and fashion. The "others," after waiting for hours outside, were always well jammed in their scanty quarters away back in the gallery loft.

In the changed economic conditions of to-day the best thing is to demolish the present building and set about erecting an up-to-date English Opera House seating three or four thousand people at prices from 1s. to 7s. 6d., all reservable. That is the present musical need.

There should be issued at once a public share offer, prices, say, 10s. and 5s. each, which would be eagerly taken up; and the site could be selected and work commenced on the new opera house at the earliest possible moment, so as to reduce to a minimum the time between the demolition of the old and the erection of the new building. OPERA LOVER

Miscellany

GOD CAME RUNNING

RETURNING jauntily home with an unexpected gift of a two-shilling-piece safe in his fist, the boy in his happiness felt a sudden, overwhelming wrench of pity for the mumbling, aged blind man standing humbly on the chapel steps and impulsively, in strange, momentary elation and generosity, he dropped the coin into the dry, dirty palm, watching the short fingers scrape its edge and close tightly over it, swiftly as if the coin had been the head of a driven nail. At once a mechanical gabble of thanks came from the ragged-bearded mouth:

"Thankee dearly, kind friend. I can't see you but He can and He will remember for me. God bless you for your goodness. . . ."

The boy said nothing. The words were cold and meaningless, not what he had expected. Already he was regretting the impulse. Foolishly he had flung away the means of great comfort. Dismayed he stood, tempted to snatch and run, to make weak excuses, plead that it was all a mistake, that he had thought it was a penny. But a passing policeman was eyeing him thoughtfully, suspecting some badger-trick, and he knew, too, that the blind man would not willingly surrender such treasure.

As he rocked miserably, the smudgy blue eyes of the blind man wavered, lost their blank fixity and blinked with angry intelligence for an instant. Dumbfoundered and afraid, the boy moved on helplessly down the street, for he knew now quite surely that he had been deceived, that the man was not blind.

For several minutes he walked erratically, fists pounding, conceiving fearful punishments, wondering how to be revenged. Unable to forget the loss he crossed the narrow, busy street, scouting slowly back, hopping into a shadowed doorway immediately opposite the chapel, watching intently, confused and strangely ashamed, but determined to prove the fraud for himself. For a long time he stared, muttering angrily whenever a vehicle passed slowly between them, his outgrown clothes seeming to become steadily tighter. But the man was clever, old at the game, and not once did his eyes switch in foxy understanding. Weakly the boy began to think that he had been mistaken, but when doubt was strongest a clock struck six and the man's head turned slowly towards the *Rising Sun* a hundred yards away, and the boy jumped a bit, sure again, remembering that quick, cunning glance, the boozy look of the eyes and the drowned grey whiskers about the ugly mouth. He wouldn't be able to resist the *Rising Sun* for long, especially with so much cash in hand.

Angrily the boy imagined the florin sunk deep in the filthy pocket, its power of bright purchase gone and only misery ahead of it. He remembered clearly the circumstances of the gift, how the traveller, pleased with an opportune word, had plucked it from a waistcoat pocket as if it had been reserved for just such an occasion. They had laughed together, the

boy for joy and the traveller in sheer good humour, and the coin itself had seemed bright and warm with a life of its own, pleased with its welcome.

Proudly the boy had carried it through the day, planning to spend it gaily but thriftily, to extract full value from every penny. His wage was never more than ten shillings a week, and all was needed by his wise and patient mother to feed and clothe him now that his father was dead. Sometimes she found sixpence for him, but it was impossible to spend it cheerfully, remembering the dreary earning of it.

But the florin had been different, marvellously unexpected. Now it was all gone to waste. Why had he felt that way? He did not know more than that a warm swim of blood had raced through him, making the gift seem beautifully necessary. Not so almighty bad if it had really done good, given strength to a potterer, but this Charley Poke was not blind at all or needy; he was just a damned, gabbling cheat, though it wasn't going to be easy to prove. Where was God that He permitted such dirty trickery?

As if ashamed, too, the sky had darkened into night and the street was bravely keeping up appearances with spidery tangles of light. Watching had become much less easy, for the chapel steps were recessed and unlighted, but the boy did not cease to stare. As if unaware of light or shade, Charley Poke still stood and mumbled with a fine pretence of patience under affliction, anguished words breaking from him only at strangely opportune moments, as when a parson or a lady with a holy manner and obvious wealth drew level, the phrases being always the same:

"And God came running to ease their blindness, but I was not there. I am alone in darkness and I must bear it till He cometh again. God made light but I know it not. Praised be the Lord. . . ."

Clever talk which undoubtedly made many thank God for His gifts to them and aroused pity for the unfortunate one, all kinds of women and a few elderly men pressing coins into the ready palm. But the boy was not impressed. He knew better, knew that the man's frequent glances towards the *Rising Sun* were not accidental. Yet, knowing so much, he still did not know how he was to recover the florin or expose the fraud. If only he could stop the game altogether. Fiercely he pondered odd plans. Fireworks exploded suddenly, or water squirted into the cunning, red-veined face, might do the trick, anger him into giving chase, though the possibility was small, he being much more likely to make capital out of the attack, win large sympathy by his complaints. The boy shivered to think of his own fate if the plan miscarried and wondered if a quiet threat of exposure would force him to restore the coin. But, remembering that hard, knowledgeable glance, he knew that soft words would work no good.

For more than an hour he watched closely. Shutting his eyes he could still see the shabby, humped figure, the greasy cape-coat hung with the shiny brass plate, the thundering great stick in the left hand, the varnished bowler hat crowning the big, droopy-fleshed head, the ragged woollen scarf, red and black like a funeral, and the cupped right hand so quick to clutch at pence and dive into the dragging pocket. Swine! Catch him out when he moved though. Have to be careful of that stick in case he had a temper to match his looks. But the man was thorough and not easily outwitted.

When at last he made a hesitating move the boy backed deeper into the doorway. Fearfully he watched the man take tighter hold of his stick and tap his way to the kerb, head straight and eyes fixed and blank. In the name of God he begged help in the crossing of the street and a path was made for him at once, a buzz of sympathy following him. Safely across he moved to the wall, tapping steadily past the doorway in which the boy stood, counting loudly, feet dragging. The boy followed warily, halting with the impostor at crossways, amused at the alacrity with which people sprang from his path, clear of the heavy, swinging stick.

Beginning a new count, Charley Poke edged round into a narrow, evil-smelling street, thrashing viciously with his stick to clear the way of gaming children. The children watched him go in puzzled, fearful silence, one who dared to shout rudely after him being instantly suppressed. Straggle-haired women, standing with folded arms in doorways, watched him with sympathetic nods, checking children as they swung on ropes slung between broken iron railings so that he might pass safely. A girl wheeled a box-wood perambulator into the road to make way, shouting lusty warning to a brother who was watering the stricken plants of a window-box with spray from his mouth. A cat, struck by the swinging stick, wailed piteously, bolting through a broken window, two more following as if hoping for a cannibal feast.

On, past the flat-faced, dingy dwellings, into a second street, a market place, lined with coster barrows and lit by sputtering jets and naphthalene flares. Several hawkers greeted Charley Poke in humorous style and he answered in an immense, God-fearing voice, accepting a gift of cold fried fish from a rubicund old woman in a huge flowered hat who watched over her neat stall as if it were an altar. Passing a beer-house, he sniffed and hesitated, blinking a bit, eyes and mind unsettled by the malty reek, then stumbled prudently on into a quieter street of warehouses, tapping and counting mechanically, turning suddenly into a gloomy, gateless stable yard, bumping his way between piled boxes to a ladder leading to a loft. Grumblingly he climbed, pausing at the top to listen and stare down into the dimness before pushing open a door. Quietly he entered the loft, the door thumping shut behind him.

Discomfited, the boy crouched behind the piled boxes in the yard, nails scraping the soft wood, imagining a thieves' den with Charley Poke as leader. Nothing left to do. It was all so thoroughly convincing, yet he *knew* the man was a fraud. He watched for a light from the loft but none appeared. A *blind* man had no need of light. If he was up there without a light he must be blind. Easy to prove that much. Very cautiously he went to the ladder, climbing gingerly, fearful that the man would appear suddenly and throw him down. But he reached the top stage safely. Creeping beyond the door he listened, hearing at first only the pounding of his own heart.

Then, like the beginning of music, he heard the sound of shaken coins and a deep muttering. Light! . . . there must be light! Feverishly he searched for a crack in the warped and scaly timbers, finding at last a knot-hole at breast level. But only darkness seemed to be within. Suspicious still he poked with a pencil and miraculously a faint light appeared, the pencil lifting the old canvas hung about the loft. Awkwardly, for the hole was small and the stage narrow, the boy probed and peered but for a moment he could see nothing. A change of angle, however, showed a candle placed in a side-turned bucket and, moving in the narrow wedge of light, he saw now the heavy head of Charley Poke, still wearing the varnished bowler hat. The boy gulped excitedly for the foxy eyes were no longer fixed but were appraising a scatter of pence and silver upon a box, especially pleased with the florin among them. No pretence now! Look at the way he was salting the fish before sucking at it, picking out the bones! Now he was draining whiskey from a small bottle and, after a thoughtful licking of lips, he picked up the florin, wrapping the scarf again about his thick neck, looking for the stick.

In panic the boy plunged for the ladder, scrambling down, thinking to hide, angry and afraid. The ladder moved under him and, safely down, a fine thought came to him. Hastily he strained at the ladder, sliding it a yard from its original position. Almost at once the door of the loft swung noisily and Charley Poke emerged, slamming the door behind him, turning, stepping confidently, anxious to be on his errand. A great, astonished gasp and he fell flappingly like a wounded bat.

The boy waited in concealment, but not a sound could he hear. Frightened now, but a little proud too, he crept towards the huddled shape, groping among the bits of glass near to the broken fist, finding the florin, pocketing it jubilantly for all its horrible wetness. Confidence returning with possession of

the coin he quickly shuffled the ladder back into position, creeping merrily from the yard, chanting silently: "God came running! God came running!" running himself the moment he was clear of the street, pausing only to rub the coin bright so that it might better please his patient, waiting mother.

H. A. MANHOOD

THE CONTENT OF MUSIC

AT the Courtauld-Sargent concert this week there was an opportunity of hearing two compositions of large dimensions, Berlioz's symphony, *Harold in Italy*, and William Walton's cantata, *Belshazzar's Feast*, and I looked to see what my fellow critics would have to say on these works, because Berlioz's music is not only discussed and performed to-day but is still of interest to the younger generation, whilst William Walton is one of the most talented and successful of our young English composers. I found little but the usual conventional eulogies which any young English composer can look forward to as a matter of course nowadays from the London press. This is not in itself a bad thing, because it is not for critics to disparage youthful talent but to encourage it. But the task of criticism awaits them also, and of criticism I found only this interesting statement in the *Times*: "But poor Berlioz's orgy of brigands, so exciting an idea but so jejune an affair of clanging cymbals, had his squibs extinguished by William Walton later in the programme. There is no heat, except for the performer, in this music—a certain amount of flame, no smoke, it may be granted, but no heat. Nevertheless, there was ample scope for cool admiration at the London Philharmonic Orchestra's assured and polished execution of the symphony."

So much for "poor" Berlioz, who, "poor" fellow, had no idea that after being poor all his life a new form of poverty was in store for him a hundred years after he first fell among brigands. Of *Belshazzar's Feast* the same critic says: "Repeated hearings seem to do nothing towards modifying the shock of astonishment at the imaginative power as well as the sheer physical assault of the work." Elsewhere our critic makes a distinction between "music to perform and music to listen to. Berlioz wrote performers' music." But he considers *Belshazzar's Feast* to be both music to be heard and "exciting music doubtless to perform when once its treacherous rests and difficult intonation are mastered." I have quoted this criticism because not only is it clear that our critic liked *Belshazzar's Feast* and did not like *Harold in Italy*, thus fulfilling the first requirement of criticism that it must be based on a genuine personal apperception, but also because the facts he gives for his liking the one and failing to like the other work are facts which produce exactly the opposite effect on another critic, namely, myself. In calling his explanations "facts," I am referring solely to his description of the last movement of *Harold in Italy* as having flame but neither smoke nor heat, which I accept as an accurate though a partial description. He proffers no explanation why the exquisite lyrical beauty of the first and third movements, and the imaginative splendour of the second movement, fail to please him, so I shall say nothing of them.

It is evident that the heat which our critic misses in *Harold in Italy* he finds in *Belshazzar's Feast*, and his remark "sheer physical assault of the work" may show where his taste lies. As we are not given a definition of heat in music we can only derive our knowledge of what this critic means by "heat" from *Belshazzar's Feast* itself. I propose therefore to describe this composition as I hear it. I had heard *Belshazzar's Feast* twice before and every performance confirms and strengthens my original impression. Now the strange thing is that there was no "heat" such as there is in *Belshazzar's Feast* in Mr. Walton's former compositions. Of his previous works the best and most characteristic in my opinion was the Viola Concerto, and when I first heard *Belshazzar's Feast* it seemed to me to show a decline from that work. The Viola Concerto was noticeable for its musical interest, it showed invention, intelligence, and a capacity to develop musical ideas coherently and consecutively. There was no "physical assault" but an appeal to one's musical sensibility through the mind. In other words, it was cool and not hot, and in this respect Mr. Walton in the Viola Concerto was much more modern, more of our own time than he is in *Belshazzar's Feast*. But what the Viola Concerto lacked was "flame," to use our *Times* critic's useful terminology. There was no "smoke" and no "heat" in the Viola Concerto but, alas, there was no flame either, and that is where it suffered in comparison with such a work as Berlioz's *Harold in Italy*, which our critic admits to possess flame—to say nothing of a richness of invention which neither Mr. Walton's Viola Concerto nor his *Belshazzar's Feast* possesses.

Perhaps Mr. Walton was aware of a certain tenuity (I don't mean of instrumentation but of musical power) in his works previous to *Belshazzar's Feast*, and set out to remedy this. And this would account for the "heat" of the latter work. But what is this heat? It is, in my opinion, the heat generated by an assault on the nerves and not the flame of musical inspiration. The former also demands a certain amount of energy, but what Matthew Arnold said in a letter to Clough about modern poetry applies equally to music; he said, "Modern poetry can only subsist by its *contents*." What are the contents of *Belshazzar's Feast*? The text deals with the ruin of Babylon, and one might find parallels between the situation of the world to-day and that of Babylon before its fall. We are all so clever and knowing nowadays that ideas of this sort occur to musicians, painters, writers, and even economists, but a work of art requires more than an intellectual motive to give it authenticity. To me there is no authentic utterance and therefore no real content in *Belshazzar's Feast*, but merely a skilful, clever use of well-known musical effects. The absence of flame is concealed by the heat generated by mere friction of dissonance with consonance, strongly accentuated rhythm, and volume of sound. There is no original utterance here, whereas Berlioz's utterance is as individual and original as it was on the day it was written. The symphony *Harold in Italy* does convince one that Berlioz received genuine impressions in Italy which he succeeds in conveying to us, but I am not convinced by *Belshazzar's Feast* that Mr. Walton has felt anything at all. This does not mean that he has not felt it, it only means that I cannot see any flame in *Belshazzar's Feast* because of its heat and smoke.

W. J. TURNER

FILM-GOING IN LONDON AND PARIS

A FRIEND of mine handed me a few days ago a copy of that engaging periodical *La Semaine à Paris* which bears the even more attractive sub-title *Où allons-nous ce Soir?* I had already seen those few pre-releases which attracted me round Leicester Square, while in the other larger houses there appeared to be nothing showing at all except *To-Night's the Night* and *Jack's the Boy*, excellent specimens of the cinematographers' art, but already somewhat wearisome and uninspired. So I went through those pages of *La Semaine à Paris* which carry the heading *Cinéma*.

France has never been considered the home of the Cinema, and the seeker after film truth has always cast his dreamy eyes towards America, Germany, or Russia: and yet even in this affair things seem to be ordered better in Paris. At any rate that maddening English system is less known by which the same film appears at the same moment in every picture house in the country and then vanishes into limbo. As far as I could make out from *La Semaine à Paris* in few cases are more than two houses showing the same picture. The result is that there is a lot to see. There were more than

a dozen German films showing last week, many of them in the ordinary picture houses of narrow-minded and provincial Paris. The delicious *Emil and the Detectives* is still running after a year of popularity: yet this film has not yet been shown in London at all—Heaven knows why not. At Gaumont Palace there is to be seen the spy film, *Secret Service*, and at the Apollo *I By Day and You By Night*, of both of which I hear the best accounts. At the little Ursulines may be seen the admirable Gransowski's picture on the nature of credit and the psychology of the depression, called *The* 13 *Trunks of Mr. O. F. Mädchen in Uniform* continues at the Jeanne d'Arc and a Lotte Reiniger is to be seen at the Vieux Colombier. Not a bad record for one week. Karl Dreyer's new film, *Vampyre*, is already installed in the Chanticler, while Russian films are represented by *The Road to Life* at the Pigalle, and *Blue Express* at the Olympic. Most of these will, no doubt, be shown some time or other at the Academy (some have already been shown there), when they will run for a fortnight before disappearing for ever. *Gold Rush* is having another run in the Boulevard des Italiens, and that delightful picture *Le Chemin du Paradis* is still to be seen in the Pigalle neighbourhood. Naturally, the more amusing American films are easily seen at the present moment, more easily than in London, where they are either fugitive or extremely expensive.

I think that everyone must admit that this programme compares very favourably with what London could show during the same week, and I will not willingly admit that this fact is due to the superior intelligence of the Parisian public. It is due rather to the superior intelligence and higher civic sense of the film industry, to the greater courage, perhaps the higher education, of the independent exhibitor. There is really only one highbrow cinema in London, the Academy, and to say this is not to be ungrateful for the programmes of such houses as the Marble Arch and the Bolton's. But in Paris the Ursulines, Pigalle, Vieux Colombier, Studio 28, Club 70, and other small cinemas may be relied upon for something "unusual," while even the larger houses are less intellectually hidebound. A larger number of small good houses is our crying need in London to begin with. Above all, a good film in Paris does not seem to vanish utterly from the face of the earth. That great film, the *Gold Rush*, is a very old story by now. *Emil and the Detectives* and *Chemin du Paradis*, to mention two, are oldish pictures. The continuance or reappearance of old films can alone give the film-goer the means to compare and to criticise—in fact to judge films as he would judge pictures or books. No doubt we can see old films more easily in Paris, owing to the Frenchman's love of the old favourite, which is an agreeable trait in his character, and which admits the long life of a Mistinguett or the excesses of a Sorel.

But I do not wish to moralise or to discuss the finances of the film industry. I only put two questions: (1) Is not this Paris programme a great deal better than a similar London one? (2) Is not this very discreditable to somebody in London?

FRANCIS BIRRELL

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Double Harness

Mechanically perfect, slightly daring, yet never tempted into really disturbing seriousness, *Double Harness* is the play for which the Haymarket has been waiting for many months. Of all the women in the busy love-life of John Rockingham, Sybil Livingstone is perhaps the least impressed by him. But she tricks him into marriage because she likes his prospects and feels that the task of making him the next Prime-Minister-but-three may be worthy of her not inconsiderable ability. Unfortunately, John's heart is turned from his former mistress and, finding herself a wife in name alone, she falls incontinently in love with him. A spiteful sister tells all she knows, and three years of devoted career-carving hangs in the balance before John realises that his treasure lies nearer home than in the wagon-lit reservation encouragingly secured by an old flame of his on the first whisper of a domestic crisis. A supreme artist wherever she is permitted intelligence and emotional force, Miss Mary Ellis gives a magnificent performance as Sybil. Mr. Owen Nares finds great difficulty in conquering his incurable decency in the part of the husband, and in his virtuous moments is insufferably smug, but he is far too competent to fail entirely with it. Mr. Cecil Parker's five minutes of parental anguish in the first act are beautifully done.

The Irish Players Again

In *Things That Are Caesar's* at the Arts Theatre Club the Irish Players have been winning new glory. Once Mr. Paul Vincent Carroll can disentangle his intentions, he should write a powerful play. As it is, he is too much concerned with flaying the stupid tyranny of the small-town mentality to realise that his venom robs the tragedy of more than half its force. When Peter Hardy and his daughter, Eilish, try—and fail—to lead their own lives (the havoc Ibsen has created at the Abbey!) the author's hand lies heavy on the scales, and their sufferings become particularised and pathetic instead of universal and tragic. Moreover, he has not taken sufficient pains to convince us that their shrinking sensitiveness has its own value, or is indeed anything more than a monstrous by-product of Peter's implacable hatred of his wife. It is her selfish ambition which traps Eilish into a loveless marriage, but it is Peter's endless campaign to mould and control his daughter's mind and spirit which finally makes her destiny intolerable. The peasant avarice of the mother is made uglier by her shoddy ambitions and ruthless cruelty. This is not a pretty play, and its comedy is as acrid as we have learned to expect from the disillusioned intelligence of post-war Ireland. But it is vivid and stimulating, far beyond the ordinary standards of theatreland. Of a brilliant company, brilliantly produced by Mr. Lennox Robinson, it may suffice to mention Mr. J. A. O'Rourke, transformed from a happy *farceur* into a grimly realistic Peter, Mr. Fred O'Donovan's manly unction as a parish priest, and Miss Sara Allgood's terrifying abandonment of humanity as the mother.

Film Charades

If I Had a Million (at the Plaza), with Heaven knows how many stars, sets and directors, is the last word in "all-star" films. Certainly, the technique of giving a series of short playlets on the same theme—how to spend a million—is the most suitable method of going through with this new form of economy-dictated stunt. The whole effect is one of charades, in which the short Lubitsch-Laughton combination is perhaps the best. But the inside of a rest home for impoverished gentlewomen runs it close. The charades are more or less equally divided between the farcical and the macabre. *If I Had a Million* is often rather silly, but never exactly dull.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, January 20th—
Prof. A. J. Toynbee on "Russia," B.B.C., 7.30.

SATURDAY, January 21st—
Rugby Football, England v. Wales, Twickenham.
Smeterlin, Chopin Recital, Wigmore Hall, 3.

SUNDAY, January 22nd—
S. K. Ratcliffe on "England's New Religions," Conway Hall, 11.
Mrs. Barbara Wootton on "The Economic Crisis and the Challenge of Communism," Hampstead Ethical Society, 158a, Mill Lane, N.W., 6.15.
"Lady Audley's Secret," and "Count Albany," Arts Theatre.
"The Wooden Idol," Ambassadors Theatre.

MONDAY, January 23rd—
R. Ellis Roberts on "New Books," B.B.C., 6.50.
"The Young Huntress," Embassy Theatre.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24th—
R. O. Mennell on "Absolute Pacifism in War Time and Peace Time," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
F. Birrell on "The Development of the Cinema," Morley College, Westminster Bridge Road, 8.

WEDNESDAY, January 25th—
B.B.C. Symphony Concert, Queen's Hall, 8.15.

THURSDAY, January 26th—
"The Comedy of Good and Evil," presented by the Welsh National Theatre Movement, Arts Theatre, 5.30.
Prof. Laski and others on "Civil and Religious Liberties," Room 21, St. Stephens' House, Westminster, 8.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

SOME people read Lawrence for his theories and I suppose that *Fantasia of the Unconscious* is the book for them, but to me Lawrence is not a teacher but a poet and an artist who has opened my eyes just as George Moore or Turgenev have done. But his recurring themes are, in their different ways, quite unbearable. When I hear his agonised Phœnix-song, calling for the consuming fire and the re-birth, I feel the extremity of pity. But when he begins lecturing and dogmatising I am bored and irritated. Sometimes it seems as though he had begun before he knew what he thought himself, and was writing it down to see what it looked like on paper. When his subject is that of men who have got sex out of where it belongs into their heads, I feel simply: "Most of us know all that by instinct without your making such a fuss about it," and when the solar plexus is trotted out, I just groan, as I groan when I see a dancer in a bead brassière starting to wag her navel at the head of John the Baptist. A prayer comes to my lips and I ask: "What sin have I committed that I must endure all this again? Can such ennui be borne?" Yet, in another dress, the same dancer will set the blood leaping in my veins. So with Lawrence, who can be as fresh, as tender, as full of delicate beauty as the first snowdrops flickering under the bare February branches, who can show me beauty which takes me by the throat. And that, which great artists achieve rarely, Lawrence can do always.

* * *

In his novels and long books the inspiration was certain to flag, and Lawrence disliked re-reading, re-writing and working over the bad parts of his work. He had no passion for perfection. I do not think that this was because of the conditions under which he worked, though other writers would have found them difficult. He wrote fast, in bursts of energy, with what seemed true inspiration, working with perfect facility in odd moments, for example when he was cooking a risotto, scratching away on the paper while he kept one eye on the stove lest the pot should boil over. Such interruptions did not matter, for what he was writing was as clear in his head as if he had been a good workman who can lay down his mallet and chisel at any moment and find no difficulty in starting on the job again. No, there was no reason why Lawrence should not re-write and alter; sometimes indeed he did. But he disliked doing it and perhaps it may have been partly superstition. Lawrence felt that he wrote from the depths of his being and he knew that this mysterious faculty had translated him from a school-teacher to a famous man. I think he had a superstitious fear that if he began to criticise his own work and analyse his inspiration too closely his genius might desert him. Anyhow he found it very difficult to monkey with the mystery of his own creations.

* * *

For that reason he is at his best in his short stories, which were written in one jet of energy, one mood of the spirit. There was not time in which his heart could turn cold to them, or his fatigue breed hatred. And there was not space enough in them for him to spoil them. Re-writing was unnecessary; there were no gaps to be bridged. But it is not only that their shortness saved them from becoming vehicles of his philosophy. His novels expressed himself and necessarily they expressed his internal devastations for they are self-portraits. The short stories on the other hand were mostly written in response to external stimuli. Thus in his latest volume of stories, *The Lovely Lady* (Secker, 7s. 6d.) two of the stories, *The Rocking-horse Winner* and *The Lovely Lady*, are on set themes of ghost and murder story, and two of the others, *Things* and *The Man Who Loved Islands* pure observation. *The Rocking-horse Winner* is not deep or true or revealing, but it is most intensely dramatic and intensely moving because of this artificial dramatic quality. It is quite unlike Lawrence and its blazing skill shows that when he went out to do the old stuff, he could beat them all. With a pure piece of artificial pathos, in spite of its involving the supernatural, he can make the page go blurred with tears. Of course, it is not only that; just see how he starts off:

> And so the house came to be haunted by the unspoken phrase: *There must be more money! There must be more money!* The children could hear it all the time, though nobody said it aloud. They heard it at Christmas when the expensive and splendid toys filled the nursery. Behind the shining modern rocking-horse, behind the smart doll's house, a voice would start whispering: There *must* be more money! There *must* be more money! . . .
>
> It came whispering from the springs of the still-swaying rocking-horse and even the horse, bending his wooden, champing head, heard it . . . . Yet no one ever said it aloud. The whisper was everywhere, and therefore no one spoke it. Just as no one ever says: "We are breathing!" in spite of the fact that breath is coming and going all the time.

There are no depths, it is all on the surface and I don't think one of his admirers in a hundred would recognise it as his work, but would set it down as by Henry James or Somerset Maugham, or think it one of those queer flashes of power with which Barrie and Kipling have sometimes made it clear that there is something behind their popular reputations.

* * *

It is not much good quoting Lawrence's opinions of his work, but he did say repeatedly that *The Man Who Loved Islands* was one of his favourite stories. It is far more than the portrait of a romantic author playing at Swiss Family Robinson on one of the Channel Islands, for Lawrence shows one the outside and the inside of everything; even of the island itself.

> A snow of blackthorn, a vivid white among the Celtic stillness of close green and grey rock, blackbirds calling out, in the whiteness, their first long triumphant calls.

That changes into:

> The island, your island, cowered dark, holding away from you. You could feel, down in the wet, sombre hollows, the resentful spirit coiled upon itself, like a wet dog coiled in gloom, or a snake that is neither asleep nor awake. . . . Strangely from your little island in space you were gone forth into the dark, great realms of time, where all the souls that never die veer and swoop on their vast, strange errands. The little earthly island has dwindled, like a jumping off place into nothingness, for you have jumped off, you know not how, into the dark wide mystery of time, where the past is vastly alive and the future is not separated off.

Similarly we see the outside of the "Master," an elegant tall figure in creamy-white serge, coming like some bird over the fallow, to look at the weeding of the turnips.

> Then there would be a doffing of hats, and a few minutes of whimsical, shrewd, wise talk, to which the bailiff answered admiringly, and the farm-hands listened in silent wonder, leaning on their hoes. The bailiff was almost tender, to the Master.

Suddenly Lawrence flashes his light and shows the inside:

> It is doubtful whether any of them really liked him, man to man, or even woman to man. But then it is doubtful if he really liked any of them, as, man to man, or man to woman. He wanted them to be happy and the little world to be perfect. But anyone who wants the world to be perfect must be careful not to have real likes or dislikes. A general goodwill is all you can afford. The sad fact is, alas, that a general goodwill is always felt as something of an insult, by the mere object of it, and so it breeds a quite special kind of malice.

We see this malice stirring in the hearts of all to rob the Master, and the resentful island like a wet dog seems to conspire with them to ruin him until he is driven out to his second island and then, shedding all human ties, to his third. And the third island, drawn absolutely from the imagination, is sublime.

> The sheep were accustomed to him now and stood and stared at him with yellow or colourless eyes, in an insolence that was almost cold ridicule. . . . And when they jumped with staccato jumps off the rocks, and their hoofs made the dry, sharp hit, and the fleece flopped on their square backs, he found them repulsive, degrading.

One sees everything solidly and one is shown its soul, both at once: the islander, the servants, the islands themselves and the sheep. And the end is an epic:

> Hoarse waves rang in the shingle, rushing up at the snow. The wet rocks were brutally black. And all the time the myriad swooping crumbs of snow, demonish, touched the dark sea and disappeared.

Yes, *The Man Who Loved Islands* is probably the best of all his stories.

MERCURY PATTEN

NEW NOVELS

Man's Mortality. By MICHAEL ARLEN. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
Try the Sky. By FRANCIS STUART. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
The Martyr. By LIAM O'FLAHERTY. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
Ankle Deep. By ANGELA THIRKELL. *Hamish Hamilton.* 7s. 6d.
A Day Off. By STORM JAMESON. *Nicholson and Watson.* 7s. 6d.
Pacific. By ROBERT CARSE. *Barker.* 7s. 6d.

If Mr. Michael Arlen's novel is to be taken merely as a thriller-story of war in the air it is a winner. I find it hard to tell whether Mr. Arlen is serious or not; he was once a fine writer and he cannot stop completely. There are many shrewd, and seemingly sincere, and even passionate observations about the condition and direction of the world of to-day. On the other hand, the characters have about as much humanity as a bunch of robots, there are promises of side-stories that never come off—blatantly that of the weird second-hand Dracula, Baron Ostoerck. The interest in mechanisms is, in relation to the interest in persons, about sixty to twenty, with the remaining twenty devoted to Mr. Arlen's opinions. The story is supposedly written in the twenty-first century and deals with the world-war which ended the twentieth. The world doesn't seem to have got very far between now and then, due solely, one is asked to believe, and can well believe it, to the persistence of a narrow nationalism which, in the person of the maniac inventor, Humanity Knox, overthrows the powerful International Aircraft and Airways Corporation and embroils the globe in awful war. The solution offered is the Utopia of a world-state, but Mr. Arlen has no illusions about the meaning of that:

> Something between a workhouse, a sanatorium, and an asylum . . . a workhouse for people tottering with childishness and an asylum for mental defectives. . . . But the main job is to prepare an attractive prospectus. Make unselfishness seem natural. Make mental defectives want to behave like human beings. Show brotherly love as the sound, practical, business proposition it really is.

So Mr. Craddock voicing his opinions. But when you examine Mr. Craddock apart from his opinions all he has is a pair of sore feet. When you examine Madame Abazar, the villainess of the piece, all she has is a mobile shoulder-strap. And for the rest of them you'd never think they had anything but a mouth—and much too much of that.

A novel like *Try the Sky* is one of the most difficult books to criticise. It has merit in plenty, tender feeling for the atmosphere of place, lyrical inspiration, invention, vividness in narrative, but it is lacking in things that are surely essential to a novel. We have actions that are not inevitable to the characters, an atmosphere of place that is not inseparable from the action, no story, none of what I should call emotion, and sentiment in which the author has only a kind of didactic or moral interest. In fact, the main interest of two-thirds of the novel is something normally quite incidental to and inobtrusive in a novel. The first third is quite charming, if Hemingwayish, for it has just the same romantic swagger, the same poker-face emotion, the same careful casualness as *Farewell to Arms*; after that the only interest that I could find in the book was the message symbolically revealed in the behaviour of the characters, and explained, I regret to say, without clarity by the author. Result—a book one-third novel and two-thirds mystical philosophising. The four characters go up the Danube in a motor boat to Passau. Then they go by rail to Munich, where a Dr. Graf invites them to accompany him on a preposterous transatlantic flight, which they prepare by philosophising. It is the old difficulty of the man who doesn't know whether he wants to write a novel or deliver a revelation. It has been solved occasionally by a natural genius like Bunyan or by a clear, patient workman like Pater. Mr. Stuart is neither clear nor patient, and if he has a message it is still unrevealed to at least one careful reader. There will no doubt be plenty of blind people who can see the Emperor's clothes. I defy Mr. Compton Mackenzie (who has written a warm foreword), or anyone else, to explain unaided the significance of the second part of this book.

What an amazing writer O'Flaherty is! There is not another writer living who could have got away with *The Martyr*. It is full to the neck of faults and absurdities. Its ending is wholly preposterous. It is at times so crude as to be almost laughable, and so brutal as to be disgusting. Yet, when you put it down and think it over, every single one of the four main characters remains in the memory with just the same vital effect as life itself. The story deals with the entry of the Free State forces into Sallytown in Kerry—I trust Sallytown will never recognise itself or it will cherish no warm feelings for Mr. O'Flaherty. There is here a slight variation from O'Flaherty's usual formula of a single character about whom the story whirls with such centrifugal force that one is swept out of incredulity by the excitement of feeling at the centre of a vortex. There are here two sets of antagonists: first, Crosbie, a sensitive dreamer who believes in salvation by suffering and his antagonist Major Dyson of the Free State Army, a cold, pitiless intellectual who is driven to a sadistic fury by the irrationality of Crosbie. Then there is Tracey, a Communist guerilla on Crosbie's side faced by his old comrade Chrackers Sheehan of the Free State Army. The story deals with the events following the taking of Sallytown and circles around these characters. In the end Sheehan spares Tracey for the sake of auld lang syne, and Dyson, single-handed, forces Crosbie to carry his cross up a mountainside, there crucifies him, sets fire to him with petrol, and flings his blazing body down the chasm into a lake below! Thus baldly put the thing sounds fantastic—and it is—but one is carried on as by an avalanche, incapable of more than a weak protest against so inadequate an adjustment between the unusual and the universal. Finally, one puts away the book in a fury with the author for such extravagant waste of genius, for there is no use pretending that the novel satisfies. When one recovers from the bludgeon effect of his method one realises that he could, if he would only take pains, be one of the greatest writers living. The book, however, is a searching exposure of *types* absolutely true to life in modern Ireland. It is certain to be censored in the Free State.

With Angela Thirkell's *Ankle Deep* we float gently back to common earth. Here there is no story at all. A foolish young married woman falls in love with a handsome man, but she conducts the flirtation with such extreme propriety that the most she gets is a kiss on the lower, left edge of her most chaste lip and much squeezing—of her little finger. How a book could be continued for so long without boring for a moment is something that can be answered only by remembering what Dr. Johnson pronounced on Richardson—"Why, sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story you would be so fretted with impatience that you would hang yourself. But you must read him for the sentiment and consider the story merely as a peg on which to hang the sentiment." If there is any criticism to be made of *Ankle Deep* it is that the author has fallen a victim to the modern vice of facetiousness and refused to take her sentiment seriously. Constantly the lovers are being called "this pair of imbeciles" or the like, which prevents one from feeling the pity as well as the ludicrousness of their situation. But I hesitate to say anything that would suggest that Angela Thirkell has not the nicest taste in satire—or it may be irony—and gives the greatest promise of being a first-class writer of light humour. But she must keep in the background of her stories. Her opinions we should be glad to see in essay form. In a novel—I regret to appear ungracious—it is her characters we want, not herself.

Realism, doubtless, is the word to apply to *A Day Off*, the story of the acts and thoughts of a prostitute during a single day; though why one must always keep that word for the unpleasant books, as if books that deal with the finer things in man were unreal, is beyond me. As far as I have been able to see there is not one attractive quality in the lady who took a day off, nothing either physical or mental to please the memory, nothing to attract pity for her or anger against her antagonists. One puts the book aside feeling that it is too true to be good. The cold, hard, fish-like nature of the *fille de joie* rebuffs sentiment and chills emotion. Miss Jameson has tried to make her pathetic. The prostitute must, I suggest, either be treated with Hogarthian brutality or endowed with qualities that she does not normally possess. That is what Tchehov did in, for instance, *The Chorus Girl*, who gave away her own jewellery to her lover's wife to save him; whereupon he abandoned her. "She remembered how three years ago a merchant had beaten her for no sort of reason and she wailed more loudly than ever." Miss Jameson has sacrificed herself to actuality and it is notorious and deplorable that truth and fiction are not bedfellows. Fiction is one of those ladies who sometimes take "a day off"; and the result is always a novel like this one.

Pacific attempts to analyse the effect of the presence of a woman on a ship's crew in tropical seas, especially her effect on the captain. In such a situation—as in *Rain*—characterisation is everything. But we are not merely never told who the woman is, where she came from, what she has been, but we scarcely see her. This, it seems to me, was a fatal error. More disastrous even for the plausibility of her effect on the crew, her presence works invisibly from her cabin where she remains a prisoner throughout

the trip. The result is a sequence of events that are connected with the woman only in an incidental way. So, Rann pokes fun at Gates the wireless-operator by pretending that the latter has been seen visiting her cabin. But as Rann has always mocked at Gates the fight on this occasion could have just as well arisen out of any other similar taunt. I have no doubt that Mr. Robert Carse knows the sea and seamen. Read as an account of life on a Pacific cargo-boat his book is full of interest; read for what it purports to be it can scarcely be called a success.

SEÁN O'FAOLÁIN

THE ART OF REVOLUTION

The History of the Russian Revolution. Vols. II and III. By LEON TROTSKY. Translated from the Russian by MAX EASTMAN. *Gollancz.* 18*s. each volume.*

Now that we have read Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution* in its entirety, it is plainly a great book. It is more than a brilliantly written and well documented account of great events of which we might otherwise have always remained only vaguely aware. It is also a philosophic interpretation of these events by a man of first-class intellectual ability who himself played an important part in them. Because Trotsky has mastered a method and philosophy of history, he has imposed order on an immensely complex set of facts which other people present merely as a catastrophe or a romance or a muddle. In the hands of incompetent devotees the Marxian interpretation of history is frequently an aggravating kind of rubbish. In the hands of a master it presents an unescapable challenge to the established interpretations. If Trotsky is right in essentials, his history bears the same kind of relationship to most other historical writings that Gibbon bears to the mediaeval chroniclers. They are useful because they have dug out and preserved a number of facts: their interpretations, in so far as they offer any, will be remembered only as amusing examples of the mental habits of their age.

The book is not an evening's amusement. Some of it, particularly in the second volume where, I think, Trotsky's excellent translator, Mr. Eastman, has flagged a little—is rather heavy-going and overloaded with controversial detail. In the last volume, as the climax approaches, the narrative warms and quickens to the splendid tempo of the early chapters. Even the heaviest passages of the book are relieved by excellent character sketches. Zinoviev, Kerensky, and Korniloff, the would-be Napoleon of the Revolution, are particularly good. Trotsky is also capable of the most penetrating incidental observations. Speaking of the success attributed to the "simplicity" of Bolshevik slogans, he remarks that the real difference between their slogans and those of their opponents was that they did not always "reduce themselves in the last analysis to a defence of private property." Again, "the desire of a ruling nation to maintain the *status quo* frequently dresses up as a superiority to 'nationalism,' just as the desire of a victorious nation to hang on to its booty easily takes the form of pacifism. Thus MacDonald, in the face of Gandhi, feels as though he were an internationalist. Thus, too, the gravitation of the Austrians towards Germany appears to Poincaré an offence against French pacifism."

People who have not studied Bolshevik literature will find most illumination in the chapter on the "Art of Insurrection." No one who has read it will again make the mistake of thinking that Lenin was just a "conspirator" fishing in troubled waters: they will discover the difficulty he had in keeping back the revolutionary masses from making premature insurrections. Just as conspiracy can never change a system of society—though it has frequently upset a particular government—so mere insurrection must fail because, lacking leaders with a conscious philosophy and plan, its force dissipates and counter-revolution soon gets its chance. That is the peculiar difference between middle-class and proletarian revolutions. A middle-class revolution may succeed comparatively easily because by the time the revolutionary situation arises the administrative positions are already in the hands of people who sympathise with the revolution. Therefore, a proletarian revolution can succeed only if it is led by men who have determined exactly upon the steps to take when they have won their power. This is the reason why there has only ever been one successful proletarian revolution—that of October, 1917, in Russia. The moment was uniquely favourable. The existing regime had ceased to perform the practical daily services which are the ultimate *raison d'être* of any government. (That revolution only comes as a last resort when all the resources of the old regime are used up is a truth that applies to all revolutions). The moral authority of the government had completely gone, the mass of working people in the towns were eager, without any persuasion, to overthrow Kerensky, while the peasantry, hungry to take the land for themselves, were also for the time revolutionary. These explosive elements were supported by large sections of the disintegrating army and navy. Finally, in control of the key positions, was an organised Communist party under the directorship of a man of genius. As a result of these favourable circumstances, the initial stages—the actual seizure of power—were carried through with the minimum of bloodshed. The bloodshed came later.

Trotsky, who analyses all this with great precision and candour, does not in this book go on to discuss the chances of similar situations arising in other countries. It should be remembered that Lenin, though for a moment hopeful that the various insurrections that broke out on the Continent at the end of the war would turn swiftly into a general proletarian revolution, never made the childish mistake that many of his followers seem to have fallen into, of thinking that the revolution in Germany or Poland or England would be at all similar to that in Russia. Indeed, he declared in a well-known passage that each country must have its own revolution arising from its own conditions. There is one vital factor which Trotsky does not in this book discuss and which revolutionary Marxists often appear to ignore. Even in the uniquely favourable circumstances of October, 1917, the Bolsheviks could not have succeeded had not the military forces been themselves revolutionary. Blanqui, who founded the science as opposed to the art of insurrection, laid down rules about the use of barricades in the street. In those days the weapons which the revolutionaries might hope to get hold of were merely inferior specimens of the same weapons which their opponents would use against them. To-day the difference is one of kind, not of degree, and no violent revolution has the least chance unless those who control the machine guns and tanks and poison gas are on the revolutionary side. Which means that capitalism may expect to stave off another proletarian revolution until it lands us in another war.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

PICTURED HISTORY

The Victorian Sunset. By E. WINGFIELD-STRATFORD. *Routledge.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Victorian Portraits. By PERCY COLSON. *Rich and Cowan.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Dramatic destiny according to our conception of tragedy remains simple and almost mechanical in its action. Our idea of fate has scarcely changed since the Renaissance. However complicated a tragic play may be in its plot, however amusing in comic relief, we know that the great ones strutting the boards for a couple of hours will inevitably strew the stage in the last act among their toppled ambitions. This sense of impending doom gives impetus and movement to Mr. Wingfield-Stratford's survey of the Victorian age. The Victorians, he tells us,

> were engaged in building up a magnificent superstructure upon the flimsiest of foundations. They aimed at no mental and spiritual revolution corresponding to that brought about in their environment by the use of machinery.

As this is only the second volume of his Victorian trilogy it is necessary to suspend judgment. In his last volume, which is to be entitled *The Victorian Aftermath*, he promises a description of the catastrophe and will no doubt draw his conclusions. "It is for history to show us where we are, and how we have got there. It is for us, in that light, to work out our salvation." Mr. Wingfield-Stratford is neither pessimist nor cynic. He takes a pleasing view of human perfectibility and himself rebukes those who might conclude from the first two volumes of his trilogy that men never practise the lessons they learn from the past.

In brilliant, busy pictures Mr. Wingfield-Stratford brings us from the 'seventies to the 'nineties—when the jubilant spirit of Empire was expressed in the ecstatic onomatopoeia of "Tar-ra-ra-boom-de-ay." We read with a sense of gratification and enjoy the tragic irony. These eminent Victorians planning, constructing and defining the universe—if only they could have realised the fate which Mr. Wingfield-Stratford is reserving for them in his third volume. His insistence on the social comedy adds to the sprightliness and emphasises the absurdities of a great epoch. For in all of us there is a hidden complainant, a moralist that

makes us despise the frivolities, the gilded pleasures of fashion's victims. As the clothes of the Victorians became drab, the male glory asserted itself in hairiness, the Dundrearies of the 'sixties became joined together in great beards. The women of the 'seventies concentrated upon the bustle with its astonishing suggestion, cumbering themselves with monstrous posteriors "in the cause of sexual selection." So, too, the female firefly retreats with phosphorescent rear and the infatuated male pursues. Victorian science became lop-sided in the conflict with religion. The leaders of unbelief, the pioneers of the new freedom, were as serious and righteous as their opponents. In an amusing chapter, "The Woman Who Did," Mr. Wingfield-Stratford quotes the exclamations of Grant Allen's emancipated heroine:

> A flush of shame and horror overspread Herminia's cheek. "Never!" she cried firmly, drawing away. "Oh, Alan, what can you mean by it? Don't tell me, after all I've tried to make you feel and understand, you thought I could possibly consent to *marry* you!"

But Mr. Wingfield-Stratford suddenly remembers our own serious days of psycho-analysis and sex. That is the drawback of his books. He is always remembering suddenly that we, too, may be as imperfect as the Victorians. The disappearance of Matthew Arnold's Philistia, the rise of a new class, the triumph of Unionism, the coming of the bicycle and the vast football crowds —Mr. Wingfield-Stratford deals with every aspect of political and popular life. Most of this is familiar to us already, but it is pleasant to refresh one's memory.

Mr. Percy Colson is also swayed by contrary moods of appreciation and of humorous necessity. He makes a brave effort to conjure up an amusing picture of Albert the Good and Baron Stockmar—German, all too German. But he is not master of the gentle art of repression and so, for instance, his caustic study of the suave Bishop Wilberforce leaves us distinctly impressed by "Soapy Sam." He can be facetious in the worst modern fashion. Harriet Martineau was too drastically serious even for her own age. Yet there is something amusing in her determination to carry the war into the enemy camp of the angels. "I am," she said, in her downright way, "radically convinced that the intellectual and moral judgment of priests of all persuasions is inferior to that of any other order of men!" Mr. Colson comments: "Can this dislike have been caused by the advice of the clergyman who at the beginning of her writing career advised her to keep a bottle of Hock in the cupboard and drink a little from day to day when she felt tired?" Can it?

AUSTIN CLARKE

A NEW STUDY OF BERKELEY

Berkeley. By G. DAWES HICKS. *Benn.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

In this book we are provided with a comprehensive and succinct account of one of the most attractive of the eighteenth-century thinkers. Berkeley's text and its difficulties, the influences which the Berkeleian philosophy underwent and those which it provided, together with the vexed question of its own continuity, are all closely examined from the modern standpoint. Preceding this comes an account, all too short, of Berkeley's times and his own somewhat mysterious part in them: the conditions in Dublin when he began rather secretively to philosophise, his odd association with Swift and the wits of London, the curious American politico-religious adventure, and the equally curious experiences as a medicine-man and economist of his later life when an Irish Bishop.

Dr. Hicks's own approach to philosophy has been that of a student of questions concerning the theory of knowledge, and he is therefore peculiarly well fitted to deal with Berkeley, whose earlier inquiry (from which resulted the famous immaterialism) was almost wholly epistemological. Again, Dr. Hicks is one of the contemporary "British realists" with whom Berkeley is now accounted as being, in despite of his subjectivisim and his theory of the mind-dependence of nature, a precursor, in so far at least as he held that "things" are and may be directly perceived. Dr. Hicks's own Platonic (as distinguished from empirical) realism, is, however, by no means obtruded on the reader's notice in this criticism, which always keeps strictly to the point of what Berkeley himself wrote, although a hint of it may be found in the value here attached to Berkeley's ambiguous reversion to classical philosophy in his last work, *Siris*.

The issue, however, is joined in the pages on Berkeley's treatment of Locke. As is usual (poor Locke, no party will give him any support) Berkeley is allowed to have been right in demonstrating that if the secondary qualities are mind-dependent, so also must be the primary qualities, and in doing away with "representative perception." But, following Locke in this respect, it did not occur to Berkeley that the external stimulus exercised on the mind in the event of sense-apprehension might not give rise to sensible qualities, but occasion the act of perceiving, in which case there would be no ostensible reason for holding that the "things" must be within the mind rather than without it.

Berkeley has a double posthumous significance, we are told; he affords "a mode of transition from the somewhat halting empiricism of Locke" to the "more fully developed and consistent empiricism of Hume"; also, he occupies a "position intermediate between the practical common sense philosophy of Locke" and the "less simple, but more profound philosophy" of Kant. This is the orthodox view of Berkeley's place in the story of modern philosophy; but it may be doubted if Berkeley would have recognised himself in either transition. He is, from his own point of view—if so one may express it—a figure isolated in his future, and the tendency to exalt his prophetic side may perhaps be deplored. If he gave modern hints they were rather in the direction of a radical pragmatism like Dr. Schiller's, than in the directions either of English modifications of Kant and Hegel in Green and Bradley, or of English speculative empiricism from Hume to Mr. Bertrand Russell. In their purposes German metaphysicians seem to be justified in averting their eyes from Berkeley's work, as justified as J. S. Mill and Mr. Bertrand Russell are unjustified when they make use for their own ends of this man, who so precisely denied any speculative value to natural science.

BEAUTY IN FLIGHT

Sympathy and Other Stories. By PETER QUENNELL. *Faber and Faber.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

An intelligent—a very intelligent—embarrassment marks these stories of Mr. Quennell's. Largely it is the author's observation of his characters' emotional wryness which gives them this quality, but in part the embarrassment seems to be his own. The desire for beauty, and a quick appreciation of it, are present in every page Mr. Quennell writes; but there is also present a shy discomfort at admitting his joy in it. He turns hastily from the spectacle of his own pleasure, and severely, sometimes petulantly, questions its validity. He is at ease with natural beauty, and at ease with his own felicity of style; but when any further and more permanent vision is evoked, he borrows an ancient scepticism, that scepticism once supremely expressed in a picture of Mr. Max Beerbohm's, when Dr. Jowett asked: "And what will they do with the Grail, if they find it, Mr. Rossetti?"

This is not merely saying that the critic in Mr. Quennell lays traps for the artist. It is more than that. These stories, beautifully written, conceived with coolness, with scenes of exquisite justice, fail of excellence not because Mr. Quennell is critical of what he is writing and how, but because he is critical of his very inspiration. He will not make that necessary abandonment to illusion; he remains not merely aware of this world of his invention, but sceptical of his awareness and of its sanctions. It is as if, in a display of perfectly carved marionettes, the showman should suddenly let all strings go slack, and leave his tiny stage littered with abandoned figures, awkwardly tumbled against the lovely scenery. There are but five stories in the book, and this criticism does not hold against the title-story, *Sympathy*, which has a deadliness of precision in its analysis of the woman who is sorry for herself, and of her brother on whom she unscrupulously feeds, to satisfy her emotional greed. It is an excellent story; but in its manner a little too workmanlike. The introduction of the vampire-motif enables Mr. Quennell to produce a cunning curtain, but the curtain belongs to another theatre than his.

His own theatre, shown in the two stories called *Travellers*, in *I Doubt the Dryades* and in *Climacteric*, is of the school of Henry James. It is an extraordinary pleasure to find short stories written with loving care, by one who does not disdain that inquiry into idiosyncrasies and conquerable weaknesses which has been so largely displaced by the rough exposure of typical reactions. The two women in *Travellers I*, the two men in *Travellers II* are patently and maddeningly individual; they are what people we meet seem to be, if we have any gift for the observation of our fellows, not mere mirrors of the author's moods. And when Mr. Quennell abandons them—as at moments he does abandon Bridget, and Estridge—he abandons them as one leaves, alas!

people whose difficulties become tiresome, not through forgetfulness, but through a sudden disbelief in one's own powers. How much Mr. Quennell can give us, and how quietly, can be shown by a passage from *Travellers II* when Estridge has awakened in the early morning:

> From the ceiling a lizard faintly squeaked and, the dusk slowly clearing before his eyes, he made it out flattened along the cornice, spreadeagled like the parody of a human being, its roundish head, little neck, the tiny digits clinging fanwise to the plaster—Oh, Lord, how obstinate and how helpless! It clung with such tenacity to the smooth wall, then craftily shot off sideways and down a crack. That obstinate clinging to the naked surface, quite immobile as if gummed on to the spot, the furtive flickering movement with which it ran, a toneless squeak, the wriggling whiplash of its tail, summed up, he imagined, its whole life, a life which was all desire to live, just a faint voice in the dark corners of a room, a rustling, a tiny shadow on the plaster which might equally have been a cobweb or a stain. . . . No division between life and the desire for it. Well, he understood, smiling reminiscently as he lowered his bare feet towards the floor.

Estridge has started on his travels, doomed by Harley Street. Doom, the doom of youth and beauty, has a fascination for Mr. Quennell; for even in *Climacteric*, where he writes of old people, it is the youth and the beauty in them which seemed doomed. It is a point of view: a point of view that has produced some great things in art, but not if the artist yields to the temptation himself to pronounce doom on his creatures rather than to notice, and in sorrow, or even in exultation, to proclaim it.

CANCELLING WAR DEBTS

War Debts and World Prosperity. By H. G. MOULTON and L. PASVOLSKY. *Faber and Faber.* 18s.

The most significant fact about this authoritative study of war debts and war debt policy is that it comes from the United States. For it is above all a perfectly clear and convincing statement of the sheer impossibility of these debts ever being paid, and of the certainty that any attempt to enforce payment of them will involve disaster not only for the debtors but also for the United States as the ultimate creditor of all the rest. The authors indicate the scope of their volume when they say at the beginning that they are primarily concerned with answering two fundamental questions. "(1) Would a complete obliteration of all reparation and inter-allied war debt obligations promote or retard world prosperity? (2) Would collection of these inter-governmental debts be economically beneficial to the creditor countries?" At the end of the volume we find these two questions answered. The authors conclude unhesitatingly that complete cancellation would promote world prosperity, and that the collection of the existing debts would be thoroughly detrimental to the creditors.

These conclusions are arrived at on the basis of a thorough and well-documented study of the problem, based largely on the series of volumes issued during the past few years by the Brookings Institution, which is also responsible for the publication of the present study. Not only the magnitude of the outstanding debts and the terms and conditions on which they were contracted are brought within the scope of this review, but also the forms in which the actual expenditure of the borrowed money took place. Thus it is emphasised that the vast sums borrowed directly or indirectly from the United States both before and after her entry into the World War were spent almost, though not quite, exclusively on supplies actually purchased in America, and that in addition the Allies, and especially Great Britain, made considerable purchases of American goods out of money furnished by the sale of American or international securities previously in European ownership. The war debts, at the time when they were contracted, thus represented directly a movement of goods from the debtors to the creditors. This, however, would imply the reception into the United States of a large and rapidly growing surplus of imports over exports, whereas under any normal conditions of international trade the huge American surplus of exports over imports of goods is likely to be reproduced. The authors show clearly that this situation could only be altered within any measurable period, so as to give the United States the required import surplus, by the sacrifice of a number of vital American industries which depend on export markets for the sale of a large proportion of their total output, as well as by a drastic downward revision of the American tariff on imported manufactures. They dispose conclusively of the contention that, although Europe cannot pay the United States with its own exports, it can pay by exporting goods to less developed countries which will in turn make payment by sending their produce to America. For, as they point out, this method of payment, no less than direct payment by Europe, implies the existence of a huge American surplus of imports.

The value of this book, however, does not lie wholly in its successful demonstration by American authors of the impossibility of European debts to America ever being paid; it lies at least equally, as far as European readers are concerned, in its presentation of the difficulties in the way of persuading the American public to accept this inescapable conclusion. For, as the authors point out, the way the American taxpayer looks at the suggestion that he should let the European countries off their debts is something like this. If Europe, which is able still to expend large sums on armaments and shows no signs of repudiating the far heavier internal claims of domestic public creditors, is to be let off, the American taxpayer will be called upon to shoulder the burden. For the money lent to Europe was borrowed by the American Treasury, and repudiation could not possibly occur unless it were to be applied to the whole of the American domestic debt. But the American taxpayer is very conscious in the midst of the present slump of his existing burdens, and in no mood, any more than the taxpayers of other countries, to tolerate an addition to them if he sees any way of avoiding it. The authors recognise that this attitude is natural; but they argue against it on the ground that the overwhelming interest of the American taxpayers and of the American Treasury lies in bringing about a revival of world prosperity and of the European market, and that this cannot possibly be achieved as long as the war debt problem remains unsolved. Even a moderate revival of prosperity, they urge, would bring in to the American Treasury, on the basis of the existing taxes, far larger sums than America is being called upon to forgo in payments from abroad; and if, as they anticipate, a general cancellation would provide a powerful stimulus to world revival, the American taxpayer stands to gain and not to lose by generosity. In stating this case, the authors recognise that they are running counter to the opinion, still common in the United States, that the revival of American prosperity will come about not as a result of recovery elsewhere, but as a purely internal thing. They do not underestimate the strength of the forces in

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America advocating a policy of economic isolation, and a refusal to become further involved in the complications of European economic problems. But they point out, in the first place, that this policy would involve almost impossibly large readjustments of the American economic system in face of the present dependence of American production upon exports, and in addition that it is totally inconsistent with the demand that Europe should go on paying. For it implies a maintenance of high tariffs designed to exclude European goods in order to establish the proposed new internal equilibrium of American economic life.

THIS INSUBSTANTIAL PAGEANT

The Glory of the Habsburgs. By PRINCESS NORA FUGGER. *Harrap.* 18*s.*

Now that the splendour of courts and palaces has died away from a Europe obsessed by its struggles, the survivors of these social brilliancies naturally feel called on to perpetuate their memory. An effect of finality and retrospection that is more than personal to the author now clings to all such reminiscences. If, in the general levelling, we have not yet abolished the deep shadows, the high lights are unlikely to return. Princess Fugger's memories are full of them. German by birth and marriage, she spent the greater part of her life in Austrian court circles. Her book is concerned not only with her own place in the scene (she is for the most part a passive rather than a dynamic figure), but describes the general pomp and circumstance with careful attention to the smallest details.

The keynote is ceremony. This was observed in accordance with the etiquette—a legacy from the Habsburg rule in Spain—that had frozen the Imperial Court of Vienna. One uses the word " frozen " as implying rigidity, not coldness. Who, indeed, could avoid warmth and animation in that atmosphere of dancing and banqueting, music and hunting, of gold-embroidered dress-clothes, glittering jewels, rich silks and velvets, ornate chandeliers fitted with candles to the number of ten thousand? There was only one criterion of fitness to participate in these functions—that of ancestry. " This test of nobility," writes Princess Fugger, " which consisted of proof of sixteen ancestors of noble birth in a direct line, had to be undergone by any gentleman aspiring to the honour of a chamberlainship, or by a lady who wished to wear the Order of the Starry Cross." When it came to matrimony a similar, if in this case an unwritten, law was held in equal veneration. Little wonder that some of the dramas in that brilliant circle arose from the artificial barrier of a lover's humble birth. The Archduke Ferdinand himself (with whom the author exhibits a happy friendship) was forced to endure innumerable slights to his wife on account of her inferior position, and although the ill-treated Sophie Hohenberg was ultimately advanced in rank and title, yet Princess Fugger notes with an engaging frankness how the shots fired at Serajevo prevented political complications which this morganatic union would undoubtedly have fostered. It may, to be sure, have precipitated a war that swept away the Austrian monarchy. An earthquake seems an extravagant way of ending an argument of precedence.

" Art thou aught else but place, degree and form? " Henry V might well have put his question to the ceremony of the Habsburg court. Another example of its stern social ostracism is provided by the story of Princess Fugger's sister. Bent on marrying an untitled First Lieutenant instead of some eligible candidate, she was compelled to endure a village wedding without pomp, carriages, or bridal clothes. The sorrow felt and recorded by the author over that event betrays the immense importance of ceremony for those it influenced. Princess Fugger obviously adored it. Throughout her narrative she shows a debutante's enjoyment of court and country-house functions, a delight in the attentions of princes, a pleasure in heaping glory upon glory and in cataloguing illustrious names. The personalities behind these titles remain hazy; hers is not the skill that can vitalise the scene with individuals. There are, however, encounters with the Emperor Franz Joseph and first-hand episodes in his relations with the actress Frau von Kiss-Schratt. There are glimpses of Kaiser Wilhelm at army manoeuvres and letters from the Archduke Franz Ferdinand from abroad defending his disregarded right to the succession. " I do not care to show myself in Vienna," he writes indignantly, " and have no business to be there as the ' Successor to the Throne furloughed with half-pay.' "

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SHORTER NOTICES

Up the Amazon and Over the Andes. By VIOLET D. CRESSY-MARCKS. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 12s. 6d.

Mrs. Cressy-Marcks' story of her long and at times lonely journey up the Amazon to Peru and over the Andes to Lima gives us a vivid account of travel along the great river and its tributaries, and of the jungle encompassed waterways, of the peoples to be met along their banks, and of the conditions enjoyed—or suffered—by the small and isolated European communities who live between such towns as Para and Manaos. There is perhaps nothing particularly new in this account, but there is a freshness in the narration that gives it the effect of novelty. When, however, we come to the Andes and to Mrs. Cressy-Marcks' courageous and painful passage of a little travelled pass, it is another matter; this is the real stuff of geographical exploration, and related with a modesty that but heightens the achievement. Mrs. Cressy-Marcks writes agreeably of Peru as it is and of the Peru of the Incas, and of her subsequent journey south-east to Buenos Aires. But it is the Andes as she saw them on the heights, more beautiful than Kashmir or the Rockies, that linger most vividly in the memory when the book is closed. The volume is well illustrated.

An Orator of Justice: A Speech Biography of Lord Buckmaster. Edited by JAMES JOHNSTON. *Nicholson and Watson.* 15s.

Volumes of speeches become more and more infrequent—for one good reason among many: the press and public have at last made the simple discovery that nearly everybody can write better than almost any man can speak. Lord Buckmaster is a conspicuous exception. Mr. John Buchan says in his introduction that he is "the most finished master of oratory since Lord Rosebery's golden voice was silenced." It is curious, indeed, that a speaker of the range and quality here revealed should not have achieved a much greater reputation outside Parliament. In his House of Common's days Lord Buckmaster did not make a conquest of the platform, and his orations in the Lords seldom reached the greater audience, as they easily might have done if he had cared for publicity. His speeches on divorce reform, birth control, and maternity in the slums are unquestionably among the best things spoken in England on public questions during the past twenty years. They have substance, passion, and felicity of phrasing such as no living statesman possesses in similar measure. A shorter and more definite biographical introduction would have been better. The noteworthy autobiography of Lord Buckmaster's father is not referred to. The editor's grouping of the speeches is unreal: there is, in this case, no such distinction between the statesman, the reformer, the lover of justice, as Mr. Johnston supposes. The man and the orator are singularly of a piece.

For Ever England. By MAJOR-GENERAL J. E. B. SEELY. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 12s. 6d.

Anthology of Empire. Compiled by ANTHONY HASLAM. *Grayson.* 6s.

General Seely is resolved that Defoe's saying, "An Englishman ne'er wants his own good word," shall not lack a high-spirited witness in these days. He sets out to proclaim "the essential nobility" of the English folk, "the strength and really beautiful structure of the English character," and the pleasantest thing about his book is that he relies for proof upon stories of villagers, pilots, and fishermen. Towards the industrial worker he is merely feudal. Rather oddly, however, he is quite pleased with the politicians. He is sure they are excellent fellows, wholly devoted to the public. And so convinced is he of the Englishman's pure goodness that he would deny him one of the characteristics from which he is always supposed to derive enjoyment, for, he says, the grumblers among us are a small minority. When General Seely is telling tales about the people he has worked and played with he writes entertainingly. When he tells us what he wishes us to think he thinks, he is rather too boyish for a director of national savings.

Mr. Haslam should be able to count upon one modest success: his anthology can hardly fail to please General Seely, for here is a companion in boyishness even more juvenile than himself. The divisions of his book are almost too good to be true: "Precious Stone," "English Posies," "Sun that never sets," and so on! He has tried to get nearly everything in, caring nothing at all about quality. Indeed, so wretched are many of the poems included that Tennyson's later imperial-exhibition odes seem tolerable by comparison.

Reminiscences of a Specialist. By GREVILLE MACDONALD, M.D. *Allen and Unwin.* 16s.

As Dr. Macdonald is much more than a specialist his recollections reveal an unusual range of experiences. A son of George Macdonald—novelist, poet, and rhapsodic preacher—he had covered a good deal of ground before, as assistant to Morell Mackenzie, he discovered his own aptitude for treating the nose and throat. He describes the shocking condition of surgery when Lister, under whom he worked at King's College, came from Edinburgh and worked his revolution in the operating theatre. He shows that as late as the middle 'eighties the profession was hostile to all specialists, he himself being one of a number who earned a large income for years in the teeth of professional suspicion. He is able to add to the immense *dossier* relating to the affair of Morell Mackenzie and the Kaiser Frederick, which had its place in the building up of Anglo-German hatred, particularly on the German side. Dr. Macdonald is a whole-hearted defender of Mackenzie, who, however, told his assistant that he went to Berlin having had from Queen Victoria a plain intimation that she hoped he would be able to certify that the disease of the Crown Prince, as he was then, was not cancer. It is a curious fact that George Macdonald, remote as he was, should have been the confidant of two famous victims of tragic marriages, Lady Byron and John Ruskin. His son gives Ruskin's own emphatic statement as to his relations with his wife, and gives the pitiful story of his middle-aged love for Rose La Touche. It is a pity that Dr. Macdonald did not decide to tell it simply, with the full facts and no hints. The core of the tragedy, as we have it here, is that the parents of an exquisite, if hysterical, girl allowed her to learn the charges of immorality brought against Ruskin by some cattish woman, and then refused her the knowledge of her lover's complete repudiation of them. As an instance of pietistic dishonesty and torture it is unsurpassed in the century. Dr. Macdonald is excellent when dealing with the concrete stuff of his knowledge and experience. When moving among the clouds of what he deems to be his philosophy he writes as a survivor of his father's generation.

An Outline of Italian Civilisation. By DECIO PETTOELLO. *Cassell.* 15s.

Outline is a cold word to describe this glowing study of Italian civilisation, which as an interpretation of a national culture is as illuminating as it is attractive. One uses the word national advisedly. For Italy politically was a geographical expression until Napoleon gave her a sense of unity, but culturally, despite the diversity of her peoples and their temperaments, she stood for a particular civilisation long before the Renaissance gave her the acknowledged cultural hegemony of the West. It is the growth of this culture from the dark ages to the establishment of the monarchy that Dr. Pettoello traces in this excited and exciting book; and it may safely be said that never before has the tumultuous life of the famous Italian cities and States been reduced to such ordered and intelligible sequence as in these well-documented but none the less truly imaginative recreations of the past. If a fault is to be found with Dr. Pettoello's interpretation it is that he underestimates the bearing of the barbarian contacts with Roman Italy upon the culture of the peoples. That the population remained throughout predominately Italian is of little moment, Goth and Lombard and Frank and Norman if they died out and left slight ethnic trace contributed if nothing else a spirit of movement and adventure to a stagnant civilisation, and changed it, not out of all recognition, but to something richer and rarer than the world had known since Greece in her prime.

About Motoring

SPEED AND UPKEEP

AN American technical journal recently implored motor manufacturers in the States to realise that the folly of certain British firms was offering American cars golden opportunities to build up new markets in this country, in spite of the financial depression, high protective tariffs, and our heavy horse-power tax. This judgment was based on an allegation that Britain is suffering from a craze for speed. This craze for speed, it is claimed, has persuaded some of our engineers to design smallish cars capable of astoundingly high speeds. Their cars are said to be delicious for twelve months. They will hold their own on the flat with almost anything on wheels, and on steep hills they will sail impudently past vehicles of other nations which cost perhaps six times as much. But pace tells, and our American contemporary avers that these engines demand a radical and expensive overhaul during the second year of their existence, no matter how carefully they are maintained by the most skilful owner. If these allegations were well founded, the British small car industry would obviously be jeopardised. The truth is that this section of the industry may be classified under three main heads. There are certain factories which deliberately set their faces against these increases in speed. They continue to build solid cars of moderate performance, which will wear well and remain quiet over a good term of years, and nevertheless possess just enough speed to hold their own with the vast majority of the cars which form our traffic streams. It is these cars which would reap the benefit if the faster vehicles proved uniformly untrustworthy, because they are at least as durable as any woolly American chassis, besides being cheaper to buy and very considerably cheaper to run. The second group of manufacturers in part justify American strictures. They realise that thousands of British drivers are bitten by the speed germ, and that most of these maniacs buy a new car every

Intellectual Crime

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In her first book "The Cost of English Morals" Mrs. Janet Chance showed that our present standards of sexual morality are maintained at the cost of much suffering and degradation. In this book the harmful effects of our present standards of intellectual morality are shown. Criticisms are made of the writings of such men as Professor Whitehead, Dr. Barnes, Sir Arthur Eddington, Sir James Jeans, Sir Arthur Thomson, Dean Inge and Canon Sheppard. To disparage the work of such men would be mere destructiveness. It is the very importance of the work and influence of these, which causes some phrases of theirs to be chosen as examples of what this book claims is intellectually unjustifiable.

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Foreign General Manager: W. O. STEVENSON.

Statement of Accounts

December 31st, 1932.

LIABILITIES.	£	£
Current, Deposit and other Accounts, including Reserve for Income Tax and Contingencies and Balance of Profit and Loss	368,084,287	
Balances in Account with Subsidiary Banks	13,762,323	
		381,846,610
Acceptances and Endorsements, &c., for account of Customers		6,279,470
Paid-up Capital		15,858,217
Reserve Fund		10,250,000
ASSETS.		
Cash in hand, and with the Bank of England		51,680,932
Balances with other British Banks and Cheques in course of collection		10,663,887
Money at Call and Short Notice		24,817,550
Bills Discounted		66,289,257
Investments at or below market price		87,351,718
Investments in Subsidiary Banks (at cost, *less* amounts written off):—		
The British Linen Bank—£1,239,044 Stock		3,717,132
Union Bank of Manchester Limited—300,000 Shares of £5 each, £2 10s. paid		750,000
Other Subsidiary Banks—(including fully paid shares and 500,000 "B" Shares of £5 each, £1 per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) and 1,000,000 Shares of £1 each, 5s. per share paid up, in Barclays Bank (France), Limited)		2,229,255
Advances to Customers and other Accounts		153,158,668
Liability of Customers for Acceptances and Endorsements, &c.		6,279,470
Bank Premises and Adjoining Properties (at cost, *less* amounts written off)		7,296,368

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year. Consequently they offer them the maximum amount of speed which can be extracted from an engine of given size, consistent with road standards of reliability, tuning and upkeep; and they frankly accept the corollary that such engines become noisy and tiresome after a brief life. Thirdly, we have a very limited number of factories which can produce small cars simultaneously capable of very high speed and very tolerable durability. The policy of this third class will be copied by the fast and flimsy brigade before we are very much older.

It follows that when a man goes to a consulting engineer and seeks assistance in the selection of a small car, the first and most vital question in the expert's catechism is "How long do you intend to keep it?" If the purchaser confesses that the car represents an infrequent extravagance, and that it must serve him for a prolonged term of years, the engineer will not under any circumstances recommend one of the high-speed makes. He will name a car which any undergraduate would dismiss with a shrug of his shoulders and some such epithet as "Stodgy!" If the purchaser alternatively announces his ability and intention of buying a new car every year, coupled with a fancy for high speeds under favourable circumstances, the expert will dismiss instantaneously the names of one or two makes suggested by the inquirer, and will narrow the choice down to perhaps one or two brands. The names which he treats with contempt may possess a very enviable public reputation, because they possess no rivals during their first year; and the hardening of second or third year reputations in the minds of the British public is a slow business. The *Autocar* of January 13th published an interesting narrative of a British 11 h.p. car built in 1922 which is still capable of well over 80 m.p.h. But this particular car was never cheap. Its 1922 version was practically a toolroom job, and was listed at some £600 to the best of my memory. The industry has made great strides since 1922; but even to-day it cannot mass-produce cars of such performance at a little over £200.

The moral of the American criticisms is twofold. In the first place it is folly to buy cheap cars capable of extreme speed unless one is prepared either to tolerate noise and expense in the second year, or to sell out after twelve months or so, and purchase a later model of similar type. The manufacture of such cars is no crime. Curiously enough, the policy was once characteristic of many American industries. The American engineer of a decade ago frankly admitted that his wares were far less tough than their opposite number in Britain, and would be completely worn out before the British rival displayed any marked signs of wear. "But," said he, "what is the sense of building for eternity when fashions change so fast? Our customers can buy three reapers (or whatever the article was) for the price of one of yours; and they will always be up to date." The British car manufacturers who market vehicles limited to a maximum speed of twenty miles an hour less than a car of the same power, size and price built on the opposite side of the street, know perfectly well what they are doing. They are not slow-witted, or ignorant, or bad psychologists. They simply prefer to cater for the customer who has no lust for extreme speed, and who buys for keeps; "keeps" with the modern car buyer seldom implies a period of more than five years unless the car is really large and expensive.

The second moral is that man always pays for what he wants, and that the price of speed is always high. There are no exceptions whatsoever to this rule, which is relative as well as absolute. Jones and I both buy 16 h.p. saloons of rather a stodgy type. Our cars can only just exceed sixty on a flat road. Jones potters, and I rush. My fuel consumption will be (probably) five miles per gallon more than Jones's. My tyres will wear out twice as soon as his. My engine will be abominably noisy when his is still purring with no rumbles or rattles. My brakes will need re-lining when his are still virgin. I shall spend a good deal more time on small adjustments than he spends, and my repair bill will be long and variegated by comparison with his. A third driver, Brown, suffering from the speed lust, selects a different make of 16 h.p. saloon capable of 80 miles an hour. It will in any case prove more expensive than Jones's car, even if he is compelled by his wife to potter on it, except when he can contrive to leave her at home. It will possibly cost him quite a lot more than my over-driven stodgy 16 h.p. costs me. It will cost him far less than a sister car owned by his sporting neighbour, who has a young and dashing wife, so that he can indulge his whims without restraint. Speed is one of the most expensive hobbies in the universe; and the potterer, whether he owns a Rolls or a baby Austin, is the only man who enjoys his motoring at the minimum cost for the type of car which he drives.

R. E. DAVIDSON

Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

No 4.—PING PONG

Mr. and Mrs. Pat Ball are enthusiastic members of the Badger's Green Ping Pong Club.

Once a year the Club holds a Gala Week.

The Gala Week rules are: (1) play lasts for six days; (2) three "pools" are formed each day; (3) each member participating plays each day in one pool only; (4) there must be at least four players in a pool; (5) each member of a pool plays one game against each of its other members.

The 1932 Gala Week began on a Monday and ended on the following Saturday. Nineteen members participated. The number of games played increased each day.

Out of 345 games played altogether, there were only 255 in which neither Mr. nor Mrs. Pat Ball took part.

How many of these 255 games were played on Wednesday?

PROBLEM 2.—ALICE'S PARTY

Owing to a misprint, the closing date was given as January 10th instead of January 17th. I do not think this misled any competitors, as solutions (which of course have all been accepted) have continued to come in. To obviate all possible grievance, however, I will give another week for this problem (i.e. until January 24th) and will hold over the solution until next week.

PROBLEM 1.—BIG GAME

A set of Low's Cartoons is awarded to:

C. L. Rosenheim, St. John's College, Cambridge.

There were one hundred and thirty-six correct solutions.

On the cumulative-point basis, *three* points are awarded for this problem.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM-SOLVERS

One set of Low's cartoons is awarded weekly to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of the names of senders of all correct solutions submitted. All solvers qualify for book prizes on a cumulative-point basis. For particulars see THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of December 24th.

Solutions to the current problem must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, 10 Gt. Queen Street, London, W.C.2, and must reach this office not later than the next Tuesday but one after the date of publication.

TO SOLVERS

1. The number of competitors in the "Caliban" contest is already about 250. Will competitors therefore, in their own interest, please observe the following points as far as possible:

(1) Each solution should be on a separate sheet of paper—foolscap if available—and should be confined to the one sheet.

(2) The name and address of the competitor should be written *clearly* at *the top*. I have several entries with no names attached (there is no objection to noms-de-plume), and others with quite illegible signatures.

(3) Letters for Caliban's attention should be on separate sheets from competition entries. Otherwise the entry may get lost, while Caliban is answering the letter, or the letter may be filed unanswered.

Sorry to be so bureaucratic, but it's all in the interests of efficiency!

2. In answer to a number of queries:

(1) *No* solutions to Problems 1 or 2 have been disqualified on the ground that method of working was not shown.

(2) Quite brief indication of method suffices. Some people like to spread themselves; others don't. I don't want to spoil anyone's fun.

STOTTLE'S WILL (PROBLEM 19 OF THE 2ND SERIES)

A number of requests have reached me for the solution of this "mystery." Here it is.

The key is "347." The method of its application is cyclic elimination, i.e., it is assumed that the letters of the cipher are placed in a ring and can be "counted out" on the "eeni meeni mini mo" principle.

(1) There are 78 letters. This will give three batches of 26 letters each.

(2) First "count out" each 3rd letter up to a total of 26. Then "count out" each 4th letter of those remaining, and juxtapose:

ZELFM KAQCO NVITS GPHXD YBRJU W
INRPF LEEML REWCO OUDKS LHYEL A

(3) Now "count out" each 7th letter of the remaining 26 and transliterate in accordance with the juxtaposition above:

DJQXC RIZKO PEHAN TBWFV UMYGS L
SEEKM YWILL UNDER CHAPE LFLOO R

i.e. "Seek my will under Chapel Floor."

The Junior Bursar, who had served in room M17 at the Admiralty, decoded Stottle's message in 40 minutes.

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Statement of Accounts, December 31st, 1932

LIABILITIES	£
Paid-up Capital	14,248,012
Reserve Fund	11,500,000
Current, Deposit & other Accounts (including Profit Balance)	420,997,244
Acceptances & Confirmed Credits	10,669,817
Engagements	4,942,906

ASSETS	
Coin, Bank Notes & Balances with Bank of England	43,007,981
Balances with, & Cheques on other Banks	14,348,542
Money at Call & Short Notice	20,596,690
Investments at or under Market Value	93,065,351
Bills Discounted	86,505,644
Advances to Customers & other Accounts	170,421,074
Liabilities of Customers for Acceptances, Confirmed Credits & Engagements	15,612,723
Bank Premises at Head Office & Branches	9,626,535
Other Properties & work in progress for extension of the business	1,079,597
Shares in Yorkshire Penny Bank Ltd.	750,000
Capital, Reserve & Undivided Profits of	
Belfast Banking Co. Ltd.	1,574,886
The Clydesdale Bank Ltd.	2,992,472
North of Scotland Bank Ltd.	2,376,393
Midland Bank Executor and Trustee Co. Ltd.	400,091

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

RELAXATION OF THE NEW ISSUE EMBARGO—AFTERTHOUGHTS ON BOOTS—DRUG INC.—GILT-EDGED OUTLOOK—GAUMONT-BRITISH

OCCASIONALLY the financial critic is encouraged to believe that the Treasury is not insensitive to the expression of enlightened public opinion, if it is persistent and rude enough. Such pretty conceits in any case can do no harm. My fancifulness may, therefore, be pardoned if I congratulate the Treasury on having listened to the views expressed in the few unbiased journals, such as THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, which do not carry the advertising of company prospectuses. The embargo on new issues has at last been partially raised! Companies are now free to obtain underwriting, and cash subscriptions, for the conversion of their high-interest-bearing debentures and preference shares, where callable, but the embargo remains in the case of trustee securities involving underwriting and the provision of new cash, and in the case of foreign issues. I had previously suggested that the Treasury embargo would best be broken by being ignored. I would, therefore, add my congratulations to Lazard Brothers and the Prudential Assurance for having underwritten non-public conversion issues—those of Edmundsons Electricity and Johnson and Phillips respectively—which broke the spirit, if not the letter, of the Treasury's "law." Cannot the same thing be done in the case of trustee issues? It is true that the Treasury is now letting a number of municipal issues through—Barnsley last week and Essex County this—but with the present need for wise municipal spending to relieve unemployment, home corporation issues ought to be pushed forward instead of being rationed by the Treasury. If only Clarence Hatry were not languishing in gaol! There is, of course, as little common sense as there is "law" about the remnants of the new issue embargo. Until a National Investment Board is constituted by Act of Parliament to supervise and "licence" public issues of capital, and Stock Exchange introductions, the relations between the City and the Treasury will never be rationalised.

* * *

On foreign issues there is a case for an embargo. With a debit balance of £70 to £90 millions on her international trading account, no one expects Great Britain to be able to lend money abroad, even to Austria for such a laudable purpose as repaying the Bank of England. But I think that the Treasury has made a fool of itself and everyone else concerned over the Boots deal. The mistake was to consult the Treasury in the first place. After the last British Note to America on the precarious position of the world in general and the pound sterling in particular, it was obviously impossible for the Treasury to regard an exchange of pounds for dollars inexcusable in the case of war debts but excusable in the case of Boots' shares. But the Government does not prohibit the export of capital. In the last six months there have been very considerable purchases of dollar securities on British account. Recently, I am told, a line of 40,000 Royal Insurance shares was purchased from American holders at about £7 per share and placed privately in London. The Boots deal is not a foreign loan: it is an ordinary case of capital transfer permitted by the law—unique only in the fact that it involved the return to British ownership and control of a great British enterprise. The deal should have been completed and the £7 or £7½ millions (sterling) handed over to Mr. L. K. Liggett. And it should have been left to good Mr. Liggett to find out whether he could transfer his pounds into dollars. No legal impediment exists, and if Mr. Liggett's operations knocked the pound down to 3.30—we should smile! The Treasury has been trying in vain to prevent the £ rising for the past month.

* * *

We have probably not heard the last of the Boots' deal or of Mr. L. K. Liggett. Drug Incorporated is trying to extricate itself from a difficult position. Its subsidiary, the United Drug Company, owns not only one million shares or more of Boots' Pure Drug, but controls the chain of drug stores in America called Liggett's Stores, which has threatened to go into liquidation if its landlords do not cancel its expensive 99-year leases. It is said that a rent reduction of 25 per cent. has been promised by the landlords, but that Mr. Liggett is not satisfied. A cash sale of the Boots' shares would help towards repayment of the United Drug Company's bonds, enabling that company to go into liquidation with its subsidiary and so "dish" the landlords. The profitable side of Drug Incorporated has always been the manufacturing conducted through another subsidiary, but I assume that this Company must have stores for the distribution of its products. Last year Drug Incorporated, in spite of the store losses, earned over $3 per share and paid $4. Anything might happen to the shares in this crisis of the Company's history, but the speculative investor may be tempted to buy them in the next slump which overtakes Wall Street.

* * *

But to return to London. The gilt-edged market has nothing to fear from a revival in new issues—capital, curiously enough, is not "used up" in the capital market—provided underwriters use common sense in the terms they offer to the borrowers. The market has, of course, some anxieties. The most pressing is the final call of 40 per cent. or £120 millions on the 3 per cent. Conversion Loan on February 1st. No one will enter into fresh commitments until that corner is turned. As for a rise in money rates, I cannot imagine anything but a gradual increase in internal trade, for which the banks have ample resources. There remains only one serious problem—exchange stabilisation. The extraordinary rise in bank deposits last year, which has been the fount and origin of the strength of the gilt-edged market, cannot be adequately explained unless account is taken of the operations of the Exchange Equalisation Fund, which began its life with a credit of £150 millions—mainly in the form of Treasury Bills. A purchase by the Fund of foreign exchange involves payment to the Bank of England or to a British bank or an account with a British bank—and so brings about a rise in bankers' deposits. The *Economist* argues this week: "Each purchase of *devisen* on account of the Exchange Fund involves the passage of an equivalent quantity of Treasury Bills into general circulation—including in that term the Bank of England, banks and all other holders—and to that extent has a mildly inflationary effect. Conversely an official sale of *devisen* would operate in the direction of deflation." I do not follow the last argument. I have always assumed that part of an exchange stabilisation plan would be the conversion of the Fund's *devisen* into gold, so that there would be credit enough to provide for an expansion in trade without the banks being forced to sell their gilt-edged investments wholesale. Nevertheless the future of the gilt-edged market is uncertain as long as the Government's policy regarding the exchange and the Equalisation Fund remains undecided. It is clear that the Government can make and unmake the gilt-edged market. Stabilisation, which will probably bring with it the expected Government debt-funding issue, is perhaps as much to be dreaded by the gilt-edged as by the equity share markets.

* * *

One of the Companies anxious to take advantage of the relaxation of the Treasury embargo on new issues is the Gaumont-British Picture Corporation. Several of its cinema-theatre subsidiaries have high-interest debentures, the conversion of which would save many thousands of pounds and make the equity of the business more attractive. I wish I could recommend these shares as investments, but Gaumont-British still suffers from over-capitalisation (acquired at birth), and its 10s. shares at around 15s. are a sheer speculation. Nevertheless it is doing its best to overcome its inheritance. It has embarked upon an ambitious film production programme, and if even half its pictures are as good as *Rome Express* it will probably make good. Investors who are not film fans should leave these shares alone, for a purchase involves not merely a gamble but a regular attendance at the Tivoli to watch the progress of the production department. To acquire a less speculative interest in this group I advise a purchase of Associated Provincial Picture Houses ordinary shares at 20s. 6d.—to yield nearly 10 per cent., or Provincial Cinematograph Theatres 7½ per cent. participating preferred ordinary shares at about the same price.

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NEW VERSE

No. 1. January - February 1933

I. A. Richards on Lawrence's 'Last Poems,' Herbert Read on Gerard Manley Hopkins, and poems by W. H. Auden, Cecil Day Lewis, Naomi Mitchison, Joseph Gordon MacLeod, Louis MacNeice, Ronald Bottrall.

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H'DROME. Dick Whittington. Daily 2.0.

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ST. MARTIN'S. The Green Bay Tree. F.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH. Tem. 6404. Last Week. Evgs., 8.15.
RALPH LYNN in
FIFTY-FIFTY.
Mon., Jan. 30, at 8. RALPH LYNN
in *A BIT OF A TEST*, by Ben Travers.

COLISEUM. Charing Cross. Tem. Bar 3161.
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HIPPODROME. Ger. 3272. Daily, 2 & 7.45.
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LYRIC. Shaftesbury Av., W.1. Evenings, 8.40.
ANOTHER LANGUAGE.
HERBERT MARSHALL. CELIA JOHNSON.
Mats., Wed., Sat., 2.30.

ST. MARTIN'S. (Tem. 1443). Wed. Next, 8.15.
Subsequently 8.30. First Mat., Fri. Jan. 27, 2.30.
THE GREEN BAY TREE
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